

Critical Humanistic Social Theory

Editor-in-Chief:

Prof. Dr. Moinuddin Ansari

Bangalore University, Indian

Copyright © 2025. ASIA PACIFIC SCIENCE PUBLICATIONS
COMPANY LIMITED. Complimentary Copy.



Asia Pacific Science Press

Critical Humanistic Social Theory

Critical Humanistic Social Theory (CHST) is a journal that publishes papers specifically using quantitative or qualitative research methods for social science research. The journal encourages scholars to conduct social science theory research from the perspective of social critical theory and emphasizes research concerned with issues or methods that cut across traditional disciplinary lines. It covers mainly but not limits to the following areas:

- Ideological and Political Education
- World Philosophy
- Political Science
- Sociology
- Aesthetics
- Anthropology
- Communication Studies
- Art Studies
- Ethics
- Political Economy
- International Relations

About Publisher:

Asia Pacific Science Press (APSP) is a swiftly expanding publisher of peer-reviewed and open-access journals, strategically located in Hong Kong. As a reliable and esteemed corporation, APSP is dedicated to promoting and serving a wide array of subject areas, ultimately contributing to the betterment of humanity. By disseminating knowledge to a global community of scholars, practitioners, researchers, and students, we strive to establish ourselves as the world's leading independent academic and professional publisher.

Submission instructions: You can submit your manuscript through the official website (www.apspublisher.com) or email (editor.chst@apspublisher.com). All manuscripts will go through a rapid peer review and production, making the process of publishing simpler and more efficient.

Publisher Headquarter

Room 03, 7th Floor, Block B, Tuen Mun Industrial Centre, 2 New Ping Street, Tuen Mun, Hong Kong, China
Website : www.apspublisher.com
Email : info@apspublisher.com

Fujian Province Office, China

603-1, 6th Floor, Building B20, Chengyi North Street, Software Park, Jimei District, Xiamen City, Fujian Province, China
Website : <https://ojs.apspublisher.com/index.php/amit>
Email : amit@apspublisher.com

Table of Contents

- 1 View the Modern Interpretation of Chinese Landscape Painting from *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land***
Shuolin Wang
- 8 Integration and Witness: A Study of the Decorative Art Characteristics of Modern Jingzhou Historic Buildings**
Wenxi Zhang, Chenyiming Peng, Yuxuan Li, Ligang Deng
- 17 Philosophical Approach to Prove Affirmative Action's Morality**
Boyong Chen
- 21 Analysis of the Penetration Strategy of Mathematical Culture in Elementary School Mathematics Classroom Teaching under Core Literacy**
Zhuoyu Zhao
- 27 From "Art for Art's Sake" to "Art for Life": The Interpretation of Chang Shuhong's Oil Painting Characters Artistic**
Xuanmin Yue
- 35 Research on the Heritage Strategies of Chinese Furniture Artistry under the Concept of Sustainable Design**
WU Fan, XIAO Congrong, ZANG Wangshuang
- 41 Research on the Collaborative Mechanism of Innovative Materials and Technological Applications in Sustainable Furniture**
ZANG Wangshuang, XIAO Congrong, WU Fan
- 47 The Intangible Cultural Heritage Revitalization and Rural Revitalization Practice of Market Folk Art – A Field Study Based on the Huji Book Fair**
Huang Li
- 54 Artificial Intelligence in International Immigration Management: A Comparative Legal Analysis of the United States, Canada, and the European Union**
Yi Peng, Yong Tang

- 61 **Pain · Redemption · Regeneration: An Interpretation of Oedipus the King under Nietzsche's "Apollo-Dionysus" Paradigm**
Yuxiang Deng
- 66 **The Rise of Digital Currency and the Adaptability of Traditional Monetary Policy Transmission Mechanisms**
Yixin Chen
- 76 **How Undergraduates Should Write Their First Review Paper- An Example from Bibliometric Research**
Yile Yu, Yule He, Tiancheng He
- 96 **From Ritual to Spectacle: Nomadic Wedding Dances and the Politics of Cultural Transformation in China**
Manfang Lyu, Hongjia Guo
- 106 **The Impact of Cultural Identity on University Students' Career Identity: An Empirical Study Based on Psychology Education Curricula**
Tingting Wang, Zhixing Yin, Yanping Fu, Xiangfa Liu, Hongbing Li
- 112 **The Impact of Modern Consumerism vs. Taoist "Wu Wei" Wisdom on Individual Happiness**
Xiaofang Gong
- 124 **Research on the Path of Promoting High Quality Development of County Economy through New Quality Productivity: Based on Field Research in Deqing of Zhejiang Province**
Jinyi Yuan
- 133 **The Zeitgeist of Longyuan: The Simple and Honest Colors of Gansu Oil Paintings Selected for The 14th National Exhibition of Fine Arts**
Xuanmin Yue

View the Modern Interpretation of Chinese Landscape Painting from *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land*

Shuolin Wang*

Northwestern Normal University, Lanzhou, 730000, China

*Corresponding author: Shuolin Wang

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: The movie *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land*, directed by famous directors Zhou Liya and Han Zhen, produced by the Palace Museum and China Oriental Performing Arts Group, and the creation background of the national treasure-level cultural relic “Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains” was launched on major screens this summer, setting a peak in the box office of this type of film in China. The film combines the charm of Song Dynasty landscapes with modern aesthetics, breaks the limitations of paintings and dance dramas, and conveys the emotions contained in famous paintings to the audience from a more free perspective. This article starts from the evolution of “A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains” to the movie *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land* and summarizes and summarizes the film technology to shift green landscape painting from a two-dimensional plane to a three-dimensional space, which can better reflect the beauty of Chinese painting’s artistic conception, stimulate the emotional resonance of the audience, and promote the creative transformation and innovative development of Chinese traditional culture.

Keywords: Wang Ximeng; *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land*; Map of A Thousand Miles of Rivers

Published: Apr 4, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.221>

1.introduction

With the development and progress of society, economy and culture, traditional Chinese art has been “chased” by more young people. From the popular “Tang Palace Night Banquet” in the Henan Spring Festival Gala to the theatrical version of “Dream of Red Mansions”, to the national tour of the 2021 dance poetry drama “*A Tapestry of a Legendary Land*-Dance Painting <Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains>”, all fully demonstrate the important role of dance dramas in the process of “cultural relics revival”. As the first long dance film in China, *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land* takes advantage of the technological advantages of film technology to break through various limitations of stage plays, further extends the artistic space and aesthetic artistic conception displayed in paintings, and creates many immersive scenes. Regarding the innovative presentation of the movie *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land* on the stage, domestic research is mostly based on papers, but the differences in expressions between painting and film are still in a blank state. The research in this article begins with classics, aims to inherit, and is intended to be innovative. It adopts a comparative research method to carefully explore the breakthrough of *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land* in artistic form, in order to promote the innovative application of painting art in images.

2.Artistic transformation from “A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains” to *A*

Tapestry of a Legendary Land

“A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains” is one of the top ten famous paintings in my country. It was written by Wang Ximeng, a painter in the Northern Song Dynasty. The scroll is twelve meters long and has three volumes, all of which are colored with stone green and stone green. When you unfold the scroll, the first thing that catches your eye is the majestic mountains. The mountains are rolling and undulating, either towering into the clouds, as if they are about to break through the sky; or winding, like a giant dragon circling. Between the mountains, clouds and mists are filled with clouds and mists, and the clouds and mists are light and lively, creating a mysterious atmosphere. The rivers and lakes in the painting are another magnificent beauty. The river water is presented in the white-leaving technique, but it gives people a sense of rippling waves, rushing endlessly, fast or slow, wide or narrow. The river surface is occasionally decorated with a few small boats. The small boats look extremely small in this vast river, but add a bit of leisure and satisfaction, as if the people on the boat are intoxicated by the mountains and rivers. At the end of the painting, there are villages and towns scattered between mountains and rivers. They are a fusion of fireworks and the beauty of nature on earth. The buildings with white walls and black tiles are arranged in a staggered manner. The streets and bridges are clearly distinguishable. In the villages, there are chickens and dogs, and children play. In the towns, people come and go, and it is very lively. With its profound humanistic connotation and historical accumulation, “The Map of the River and Mountains” allows us to feel the fireworks in the lives of urban people in that era.

The movie *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land* is adapted from “The Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains”, which tells the story of “The Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains” being about to be exhibited. The showrunners walked into Wang Ximeng’s heart and accompanied him through the precious time of hard work in painting this painting. The film is divided into ten chapters: “Ask seal”, “At first sight”, “Singing silk”, “Listen to the Rain”, “Search for stone”, “Practicing the brush”, “Green”, “Quenched ink”, “Thoughts”, and “Into painting”. Following the perspective of the showrunner, they walked into “Ask seal”, which is a picture of seal carving people flying through steel and stones and engraving famous chapters. They used a knife like a pen, and changed freely in a square inch; the third part “Singing Silk” is taken from “Silkworm Weaving Picture”, which tells the story of silk weaving people weaving canvas with spring silkworm silk. The process is exquisite, and finally ended with Wang Ximeng hiding from the rain, bringing out the fourth part “Listen to the Rain” and dancing alone, which has the effect of connecting the past and the future. “Search for stone” is a story about the grinding stone man visiting mountains and rivers to find stones and grinding pestles and mortars for the colors of stone green, stone green, ochre, etc. The grinding stone man travels through mountains and rivers, grinding the ore into powder, creating the dazzling green green in “A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains”; the first paragraph of “Practicing the brush” shows the scene of students interacting with teachers in the classroom, the boy is lively and naughty, and the boys in pink clothes dance lightly and cheerfully. The second paragraph is the scene of the pen-maker making a pen with hundreds of crafts. This brush that embodies the countless efforts of the pen-maker, following Wang Ximeng to paint all over the mountains and rivers; “Quenched ink” is a scene where the ink-maker spends energy to create ink like lacquer, like a piece of film. As mentioned, a good ink requires multiple steps such as smoke refining, simmering, hammering, and pestle. As the saying goes, “100,000 light glue, and hang it for more than a hundred days, it will only make a little like lacquer”^[1]. In this section, a group dance of “green” is added, which reflects the sonorous and powerful of male ink makers. The “green” paints the eyebrows of distant mountains and the peak buns, the sleeves are gradually dyed, and the skirts are entangled, dancing gracefully in the landscape painting scroll, like the layers of mountains. The towering peaks formed by the body show the beautiful scenery of thousands of miles of rivers and mountains. Whether it is dragging slowly or moving horizontally, it is slow and powerful. From a distance, you can look at the top of the group jade mountain, look at the charming green mountain up close. The movie *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land* cleverly intertwines and penetrates the extras with the landscape, achieving the effect of dancing in the scenery and the scenery in the dance, allowing the viewer to understand the true meaning of “mountains and rivers are born from me, I am born from me, and mountains and rivers are born from me, and mountains and rivers meet me and transform into traces”^[2]. It can be said that *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land* truly portrays “Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains”.



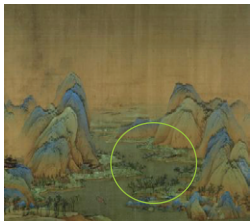
3.The transformation of techniques from “A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains” to *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land*

As one of the top ten famous paintings in my country, “The Painting of the River and Mountains of Thousand Miles” fully demonstrates the aesthetic view of “Tao travels in art, and art conforms to Tao” in terms of technique^[3]. The paintings not only contain vast and distant mountains and rivers, but also subtle figures as dust. The movie *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land* starts with the creative process of “A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains”, expresses the images in the painting with film techniques, linking the past and present, so that the viewers can understand the interest in the painting more clearly, and convey the ever-fading green scroll to the world with the lens of the movie.

3.1 Art skills in “A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains”

First, in terms of composition, both “high and lofty”, “flat and far-reaching” and “deep”. what is “high and lofty”? Guo Xi said: “From the mountain to the top of the mountain, it is called lofty.” Specifically, the peaks in the middle of the picture are towering into the clouds, and the top of the mountain is covered with mist. The waterfall in the painting falls four times in a row from top to bottom, and the water is vigorous, forming a rare four-stack waterfall. On the right side of the picture, you can see a peak that can almost reach the sky. It is the highest peak of the whole volume, “Tianzhu Peak”^[4], which is contrasted clearly with the two surrounding hills. Looking up from the bottom of the mountain, it forms a “high and lofty” visual effect. “Far-depth” emphasizes the sense of depth, “Far-depth from the mountain to the front of the mountain, it is called far-reaching”. On the opposite bank of “Tianzhu Peak”, there is a tower shadow. Behind the tower is a double-eaved roof building complex located between the mountains. Behind the double-eaved hall, a small path is deeper, leading to a long and steep stairway. Looking at the other bank on this bank can make people feel the transparency and heaviness of the endless mountains of Liao. Finally, there is “flat and far away”, “Looking at the distant mountains from the nearest mountains is called flat and far away”. The “far” here does not refer to the distance, but a special sense of space, which makes people have a vast visual experience. For example, in the third section of the scroll, one “small pan mountain” appears after another^[5]. Under the Xiaopan Mountain, dense reeds, vermicelli and calamus grow. On the other side of the river, more majestic mountains and more delicate flora appear. In this picture, two times are created: one is the coming of twilight and hazy; the other is the long road is far away, and it is the special distance between the near mountains and the distant mountains to create a distant scenery(see table 1).

Table1

high and lofty		The peaks in the middle of the picture are towering into the clouds,and the top of the mountain is shrouded in mist. The waterfall in the picture falls from top to bottom for four consecutive times.Water is vigorous, forming a rare four-stack waterfall.
deep		Behind the tower is a double-eaved building complex located between the mountains.Behind the double-eaved hall,a small path is deeper and leads to a long and steep staircase.
flat and far-reaching		Below Xiaopan Mountain, dense reeds,watercress and calamus grow.On the other side of the river,more majestic mountains and more delicate flora appear.

Second, in the creation of artistic conception, “The Map of Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains” emphasizes the viewer’s mentality and feelings. The opening line includes both tall and tall “long pine”, as well as “different pine” with staggered branches, and “ancient pine” with old and scalloped skin ^[6], symbolizing the painter’s proud and upright spirit. The pavilions, towers and thatched cottages standing in the forest remind us of a passage in “Carefree Wandering”: “If a person who rides on the rightness of heaven and earth and controls the debate of the six qi to travel infinity, is he evil to be with him?” ^[7] Wang Ximeng used this to show his state of mind: a gentleman lives in the mountains and forests forever, is not bound by the world, and comes and goes freely, and goes back as he goes, then he can spend his free life.

Third, in terms of scene dynamics, every time I pass by a bamboo forest, I have to continue to show the scroll and look back and walk along the winding path. The pedestrians on the road provide us with the perspective of observing this painting. For example, along the footsteps of pedestrians, you can judge where the road blocked by mountains passes through, where the water stops, follow the light boat on the river, and naturally come to the “Peach Blossom Land” written by Wang Ximeng - Taoyuan Villa and Oulu Villa ^[8]. At the same time, the viewer seems to be the people in the painting, walking with them, observing from their perspective, truly achieving “changing the scenery”.

Fourth, in terms of color, it inherited the green and green painting method since the Tang Dynasty, seeking changes in the simple and unified blue and green tone. Against the backdrop of ochre, the stone green and stone green in the mountains appear more bright and dazzling, and the brown color is also reflected in the painting. It is used to express mountains, rivers and trees, making the picture more vivid and realistic.

3.2 Innovative expression in *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land*

Although in the art genealogy, painting and film are considered to be two mediums far apart. For example, painting displays objects in a flat manner, while films have three-dimensional and three-dimensional spaces; paintings have a unified observation point, while films can be experienced in immersively from multiple angles. The movie *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land* has made a media attempt to integrate this innate attribute barrier. Although it is a concrete imitation of two-dimensional pictures, it gives the picture a new life, making Wang Ximeng’s story regain its glory after thousands of years.

First, from the perspective of scene construction, the movie adopts a stage design of “concentric circles” to express the “change of scenery” in painting: a four-layer rotating platform is installed on the ground, which sometimes rotates in the same direction with the drive of the motor, sometimes reverses, and sometimes interlaced, forming a constantly changing stage space. When the “green” slowly lowers its waist on the circular stage, it cleverly forms a rotating Bagua array, combined with the changes of mountains in the background, forms a dynamic scene space, leading the viewer into the cycle of time. The creative rules of the “Three Far Methods” are reflected in the construction of the character scenes in *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land*. In the flat field, the director uses the water waves at the front of the stage to create a vast and open picture - the foreground is three tilted female dancers, the middle scene is the starring “Green” looking sideways and sleeves, and the distance is three or four groups of staggered ridges, which clearly present a continuous and winding atmosphere of thousands of miles of mountains. The lofty and faraway are most suitable for depicting mountains and ridges. The shots are often placed at the lower end of the group of characters to highlight the green and green color of the strange peaks and the cliffs that are steep and tall. In the “deep”, the director used a stage scheduling with a single sleeve covering his face and tilting his back to mop the floor to complete the deep visual effect performance (see table 2).

Second, from the perspective of color, *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land* abandons the use of strong colors and selects simple and quiet tones for two reasons: First, it highlights the unique simplicity and elegance of Song-style aesthetics. The Song people were extremely rigorous in color matching. They usually used nature as inspiration to integrate elements such as landscapes, flowers and birds into it to form a fresh, refined, elegant and noble style. At the same time, the idea of “preserving the laws of nature and eliminating human desires” ^[9] made people feel a sense of restraint and abstinence in their clothes; the second: coordinate the matching relationship between the environment and the characters. If the character’s clothing is blue, then the environment is correspondingly green; if the environment is a slightly quaint and calm color, the character’s clothing should be matched with warm colors such as ochre. For example, the female official wore a vermilion round neck robe, held a white long scarf, and the doors and windows behind her were painted red to show the appropriateness of her clothes. In

addition, the background of the film uses the inherent color of “Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains” on a large scale and spreads it with this base. The picture completely simulates the texture of silk. When Ximeng and Qinglu appear at the center of the picture at the same time, the boundary between the characters and the painting gradually blurs, achieving an artistic space where people and paintings are united.

Third, in terms of artistic conception, the film leads the viewer into an ethereal and peaceful state through a combination of background music and dance performance. For example, the guqin at the beginning is the main melody, with a deep and melodious tone and a long echo. The key scenes are “into the painting”, with Western music as the main melody, with guqin and guzheng as auxiliary, and different instruments are intertwined and integrated, showing Wang Ximeng’s complex mood when he created it. When music and dance are combined, the melody changes from weak to strong, which stimulates emotional resonance. Chimes, konghou, zhu,xun, xiao, pipa, etc. add a simple and freehand atmosphere to the film ^[10]. With the blessing of a variety of instruments, the movie *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land* makes up for the shortcomings of the theater version’s only traditional instrumental music, and is full of modernity. In terms of dance performance, the most outstanding thing in the film is the “green waist”. It expresses the ruggedness of mountains and rocks through dynamic pitch and ups and convergence, and combines the changes in mountains and rivers in the background to indicate the changes in time and space, making the static picture three-dimensional and dynamic. The green waists of the extras are neat and orderly, and at this time the endless mountains and rivers are beginning to become lively, leading the viewers into a state where clouds float, waterfalls fly, and human figures fall.

Table2

high and lofty



The lofty and lofty are most suitable for depicting mountains and ridges. The lens is often placed at the lower end of the group of characters to highlight the green and green color of the strange peaks and the high cliffs.

deep



The director used a stage scheduling with a single sleeve covering the face and walking backwards to mop the floor to complete the visual effect expression in depth.

flat and far-reaching



The prospect is three tilted female dancers, the middle scene is the starring “Green”gazeing sideways and lowers her sleeves, and the distance is three or four groups of staggered ridges.

4.The unique cultural meaning expressed in *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land*

The origin of Chinese landscape painting is that it has spirit first and then substance, integrating the essence of nature, the elegance of heaven and earth, the yin and yang and the five elements, with infinite fun. Literary and hermits use landscape painting to write about the leisure in their hearts, while court literati and hermits give landscape painting the connotation of “forever in the mountains and rivers”. “Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains” is a courtyard painting, reflecting the rulers’ expectations for the country and the country. In the painting, there is not only the ingenious nature of nature, but also the cultivation and creation of countless people. It can be said that this prosperous era belongs to both the people and the world. Along this idea, we can naturally deduce a brand new concept -“people’s landscape”. This concept can be regarded

as the ideological cornerstone of *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land*. For example, the silkworm breeders, silk weaving people, pen makers, ink makers, students and teachers in the painting academy all hold Xi Meng's "parents". Although the painters are of extraordinary talent, they also need the help of the times and the people. As atoms, the masses are organically connected by Xi Meng, which creates this famous painting. At the beginning of the film, the scroll is not signed, but the screenwriter put all the "spotlight" on these "anonymous people", which further shows that the people are the creators of history and the signature of art should belong to the people. When the ending shot returns to the modern era, the theme of the film becomes clear: despite the alternation of seasons and the times change, the country and the people will always stay in the world.

The famous historian Chen Yinke said: "The culture of the Chinese nation has evolved for thousands of years and was created in the Zhao and Song dynasties." The 319-year history of the Song Dynasty created an extremely elegant era. In his notes, Wu Zimu, a Song Dynasty man, recorded: "Burning incense, sing tea, hanging paintings and flower arrangements, four kinds of idle things are not allowed to be ignored."^[11] These four kinds of idle things - burning incense, sing tea, hanging paintings and flower arrangements were called the "four arts of life" in the Song Dynasty. They are art of enriching cultivation and cultivation through people's sense of smell, taste, vision and touch. People in the Song Dynasty believed that burning incense can relieve worries, and making tea can bring physical and mental enjoyment. Hanging paintings has the charm of elegance, and arranging flowers can experience various life. In the movie, we can see that literati and scholars in the Academy of Calligraphy and Painting gather to enjoy the fragrance, while reading the scriptures, talking about paintings and Taoisms, elevating daily life to the realm of art, recreating the relaxed lifestyle from the Song people, and integrating the exquisite Song style four arts into a cheerful dance atmosphere. The viewer can realize the poetic and picturesqueness in a peaceful life, which is very similar to the ideal life that people use all kinds of means to constantly pursue. These life pictures are presented by the exhibition artists traveling through time and space to approach the 18-year-old boy behind "The Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains".

From "A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains" to *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land*, from the vast map of the country to the ancient Song style four elegances, the "National Team" Literary and Art Troupe insists on upholding the truth and innovation, strengthens cultural confidence, condenses the ambitions of eternal life, and gathers thoughts for thousands of years, promoting the dusty historical picture to reproduce the future generations, creating new literature and art belonging to our era, allowing more people to feel the profoundness of Chinese culture.

5. Conclusion

The movie *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land* relies on the power of technology to create a unique "national aesthetic". In terms of its innovation, the author summarizes the following breakthroughs: First, the innovative expression of the classical landscape spirit. The film is deeply rooted in the elegant Song-style aesthetics, allowing the poetic scenes in "The Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains" to the stage, presenting unique oriental Zen and philosophical thoughts. Secondly, the widespread application of modern technology has enabled the film to successfully transform the static picture of "A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains" into dynamic scenes through realistic special effects and scenes, so that the audience can immerse themselves in it; the musical effects of Chinese and Western cultures have also broken the limitations of traditional stage performances, seamlessly connecting ancient paintings with modern stages, realizing the audio-visual effect of the relationship between reality and reality; the montage film technique intertwines reality and dreams, carefully expressing the inner world of the characters, and sharing the artistic charm that spans thousands of years with the dancers. Again, in terms of cultural implication, the film put aside the grand social themes and focuses on ordinary little people, regards them as witnesses of historical development, creates a media channel connecting the people of ancient and modern times, stirs up strong cultural confidence, and is a truly undeserved "people's landscape". To sum up, *A Tapestry of a Legendary Land* uses the medium of "image" to convey the images in the painting to the world in a relatively complete way. When the viewer is in it, he can immerse himself in the artistic beauty of Chinese landscape paintings. He successfully shifted "Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains" from a two-dimensional plane to a three-dimensional space, allowing thousands of years of famous paintings to enter the homes of ordinary people and become works of art that the public likes, opening up a new path for the

return and rebirth of ancient civilizations.

Funding

no

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Reference

- [1] Wang Qiuyan J.: Exploring the origin of traditional green and green mountains and water colors. *Cultural Monthly*, 2024, 09, 175-177.
- [2] Shi Tao M.: *Quotes on Paintings of Bitter Melon Monk*. 2013.
- [3] Yang Bojun M.: *Translation and Analects of Confucius*. 2009.
- [4] Guo Xi M.: *Lin Quan Gaozhi*. 2016, 11-12.
- [5] Xie JinJ.: Research on the relationship between color and ink in green landscape paintings from the perspective of the “Belt and Road” and modern exploration art appreciation, 2024, 24:4-7.
- [6] Liu Guirong, Zhao HaoJ.: “Ware of literature” and “way of heaven”: the perspective of “way of art” and its life texture - an exploration based on the philosophical thoughts of art in the Tang and Song dynasties. *Journal of Hubei University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 2023, 50, 56-65.
- [7] Luo Jianbo, Yong Hanqing. “Fenggui” J.: Liu Xie’s important criterion for evaluating the style of the Tang Dynasty. *Social Sciences*, 2024, 08:79-88.
- [8] Zhuangzi M.: *Zhuangzi*. 2016.
- [9] Xie JinJ.: Research on the relationship between color and ink in green landscape paintings from the perspective of the “Belt and Road” and modern exploration. *Art Appreciation*, 2024, 24, 11-12.
- [10] Fang Yanshou J.: Zhu Xi’s new interpretation of contemporary values of “My principles and destroy human desires”. *Southeast Academics*, 2016, 03, 215-220.
- [11] Fu Long, Deng Xin J.: The evolution and expression of classical music in movies. *Contemporary Film*, 2024, 08, 111-116.

Integration and Witness: A Study of the Decorative Art Characteristics of Modern Jingzhou Historic Buildings

Wenxi Zhang^{1*}, Chenyiming Peng², Yuxuan Li², Ligang Deng²

1.Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Macao Polytechnic University, Macao 999078, China; The Hubei Province Yangtze River Cultural Institute, Wuhan, Hubei, 430000, China

2.media school, Yangtze University, Wuhan, Hubei, 430000, China

*Corresponding author: Wenxi Zhang, zwx1242624118@163.com

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: Historical buildings in China since modern times are the symbols and symbols of an era, and are the historical witnesses of the drastic changes in economy, culture, and science and technology at that time. Modern Jingzhou historical buildings have been influenced by both foreign architectural culture and traditional Chinese architectural culture, showing unique architectural aesthetic characteristics and decorative art styles. The article starts from the perspective of cultural fusion, analyzes and classifies the architectural types, and then explores the cultural fusion and decorative features of the architectural systems of “Chinese Essence with Western Utility” and “Western Framework with Chinese Adaptation”. Through research, analysis and comparative study of the Jingzhou South Gate Catholic Church and Tongzhen Silver Building, the unique decorative techniques embodied in the plan layout, façade modeling, detail decoration and material structure are explored, and the localized adaptation, diversified integration of decorations, and local eclectic decorative art features are summarized. It further provides reference for the protection and revitalization of Jingzhou historical buildings and the connotative development of the city.

Keywords: Cultural Integration; Architectural Decorative Arts; Modern Historical Architecture; Aesthetic Characteristics; Jingzhou

Published: Apr 16, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.220>

1.Introduction

‘Yu divided the nine states, and there was Jingzhou at the beginning’. Jingzhou culture is an important part of the long-lasting Chinese civilisation^[1]. As one of the first batch of national historical and cultural cities and one of the excellent tourist cities in China, Jingzhou is famous for its long history and bright culture. It is also the third national-level protected area for large sites^[2]. Jingzhou in the precipitation of history has formed a unique splendid Jing-Chu culture, and in modern times, Shashi was opened as a commercial port, and this port city in the middle reaches of the Yangtze River was developed. This socio-economic, political, cultural and dramatic changes, modern Jingzhou region, port, commerce, missionary exchanges closely, a large number of foreign cultures and emerging ideas into the mainland, the architecture also appeared in the fusion of local and foreign cultures. These distinctive modern buildings, which are a fusion of Chinese and Western cultures, have important historical value, artistic value, social and cultural value and practical significance.

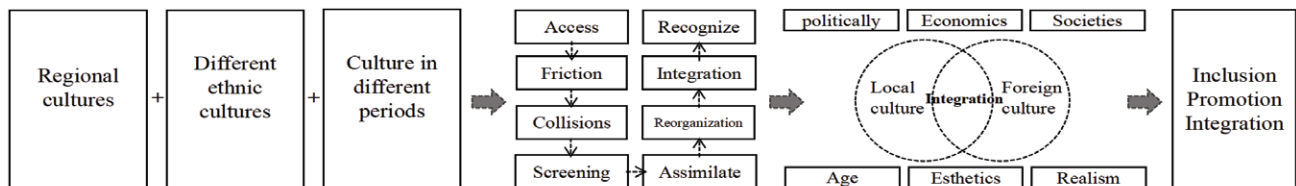
The relationship between protection and development should be properly handled, focusing on the continuation of the city's historical lineage, respecting and treating the old buildings in the city as well as treating the 'old people', preserving the city's historical and cultural memory, and letting people remember the history and nostalgia ^[3]. The value and connotation of Jingzhou's modern historical buildings is an important manifestation of historical continuity and cultural integration, some of which have been damaged and destroyed, and are therefore in urgent need of attention and protection. The inclusiveness and integration shown by Jingzhou in the face of foreign architectural art and culture is very prominent in the decorative features of modern historical buildings ^[4]. Through the architectural technology exchange and cultural integration, a variety of western architectural art styles have been integrated into the original aesthetic features of Jingzhou's architectural art, demonstrating the great inclusiveness of Jingzhou's local culture.

2. Cultural Integration Perspective and Overview of Historical Architecture in Modern Jingzhou

2.1 Overview of the cultural integration perspective

Cultural integration is a process of cultural change and a new cultural phenomenon resulting from the contact of cultures of different regions, different nationalities and even different periods, which is especially obvious in modern architecture. Cultural integration is the process of cultural adaptation and integration, where two or more parties of culture take cultural contact as a prerequisite to reach cultural adaptation in friction or collision, and then go through the process of screening, absorbing and restructuring of cultural traits to form a new process of cultural needs and cultural identity ^[5] (Figure 1). The long-term dialogue, promotion and integration of different civilization forms and value systems is an important path for culture to enhance national identity and state identity ^[6]. Due to the historical background of Jingzhou's opening of ports, commerce and missions in modern times, as well as the novelty and aesthetic psychology of foreign cultures, especially in the artistic style and aesthetic characteristics of religious buildings, commercial buildings, public buildings, and residential buildings, which are particularly prominent, responding to the co-existence of the styles of East and West and the fusion of culture and art.

Figure1: Schematic diagram of the evolution of the cultural integration perspective



2.2 Overview of modern Jingzhou historical buildings

Jingzhou is the birthplace of the Chu culture, the former capital of the State of Chu, and a famous city of the Three Kingdoms, with excellent architectural heritage of various types and periods, such as city defense buildings, palace buildings, mausoleum buildings, residential buildings, and guild buildings. Into the modern era, after the opening of the port of Jingzhou social and economic components and other aspects of great change, internal and external problems in China at the time emphasized “the country first” and other inherent national architectural style, called for foreign material civilization to carry forward the spirit of China’s inherent integration of East and West architectural strengths ^[7]. In this period, “Chinese body used in the West”, “Western body used in” in the building is particularly obvious. By analyzing and summarizing the modern Jingzhou historical buildings, there are six categories, namely, commercial buildings, religious buildings, public buildings, industrial buildings, residential buildings, guild buildings (Table 1).

Table1: Classification of recent Jingzhou historical buildings analysisseason

No	Building Type	Representative Examples	Current Status
①	Commercial Buildings	Tongzhen Silver Building “Juxingcheng” Bank Laotianbao Silver Building	Good integrity, historical and artistic value Destroyed “Destructive” preservation, unsatisfactory utilization

No	Building Type	Representative Examples	Current Status
②	Religious Buildings	South Gate Catholic Church	Good integrity, historical and artistic value
		South Gate Catholic Church (Old)	Dangerous structure, historical and artistic value
		Old Christian Church on Zhongshan Road	Unknown status
③	Public Buildings	North Gate Catholic Church	Demolished
		Shashi Zhongshan Road Post Office	Good integrity, historical and artistic value, still in use
		Shashi Customs Building	Partially rebuilt after fire damage; lacks integrity
④	Industrial Buildings	Shashi Packing Factory	Good integrity, historical and artistic value
		Shashi Textile Factory	Partially renovated and repurposed
⑤	Residential Buildings	Sanyi Street Modern Historic Buildings	Good integrity, incomplete conservation, historical value
		Shengli Street Modern Historic Buildings	Demolished
		No. 15 South Gate Street Residence	Good integrity, historical and artistic value
⑥	Guild Halls	Shanxi-Shaanxi Guild Hall	Burned down
		Huangzhou Guild Hall	Demolished

3.Cultural Convergence and Aesthetic Characteristics of Jingzhou Historical Architecture in Modern Times

The architectural art forms of modern Jingzhou historical buildings are diversified and integrated, reflecting the aesthetic value tendency with a certain rhythm formed by different time and space domains and different social groups in the actual social production and living practices. There are two main types of cultural and artistic fusion in modern Jingzhou historical buildings, one is the absorption of Western technology and decoration on the basis of traditional Chinese architecture as the main body, and the other is the absorption of traditional Chinese construction concepts, architectural layouts and decorative patterns, mainly based on Western architecture^[8]. Through the modern Jingzhou historical architecture cultural intermingling and artistic characterization, selected sample cases and field research for analysis, a total of three classifications are summarized (Table 2). The first is the architectural concept of “Chinese body and western use”, with “Chinese body” as the foundation to integrate foreign decorative elements, to adapt to the needs of the time, and to innovate the traditional Chinese architectural construction methods, the main representative building is the Tongzhen silver building and the No. 15 residential house on the South Gate Street of Jingzhou (Figure 2); The second is the architectural concept of “using western style in Chinese style”, which takes western architecture as the main design guideline and integrates traditional Chinese architectural decorative modeling, and the main representative buildings are the Catholic Church in Nanmen, Dongti Street (Figure3); the third is the architectural concept of “using western style in Chinese style” and “using western style in Chinese style”; the third is the architectural concept of “using western style in Chinese style” and “using western style in Chinese style”. The third is the system of continuous development and exploration of “Western style in Western style”, combining Chinese and Western styles, mixing Chinese and Western cultures, and exploring the development of ethnic architecture, the main representative building is the post office on Zhongshan Road in Shashi City. These cultural exchanges, collision and fusion of architectural products, has a very high artistic value and aesthetic value. These cultural and artistic fusion and aesthetic performance characteristics are mainly reflected in the architectural design concepts, architectural techniques, building materials, detailing practices, architectural decoration, etc., architectural detailing and decoration can be embodied in the roof, walls, beams and columns, doors and windows, carvings, etc. above.

Figure2: a Jingzhou Shashi Tongzhen Silver House b Jingzhou Nanmen Street No. 15 Residence



Figure3: Jingzhou South Gate Catholic Church



Table2: Classification of cultural intermingling and aesthetic characteristics of Jingzhou historical buildings in modern times

Construction Perspective	Aesthetic Characteristics	Representative Buildings	Specific Expressions
“Chinese Essence with Western Utility”	Sino-Western cultural fusion: Rooted in Chinese traditions, incorporating Western decorative elements, forming an eclectic style to meet contemporary needs.	Tongzhen Silver Building	Western-inspired façade with Art Deco elements. Hybrid blending of Chinese and foreign architectural details. Reflects social reform ideologies, revitalizing traditional Chinese architecture.
		South Gate Catholic Church	Simplified basilica layout. Localized adaptations: orientation, decorative motifs, construction details, and materials reflect cultural exchange.
“Western Framework with Chinese Adaptation”	Western-Chinese cultural fusion: Western architectural principles dominate, infused with traditional Chinese decorative motifs.	Shashi Customs Building	Colonial-style veranda architecture with simplified ornamentation. Incorporates traditional Chinese architectural techniques in details
		Shashi Zhongshan Road Post Office	Peak of experimenting with “China’s inherent architectural forms”. Modern Western functional layout fused with traditional Chinese decorative details .
Hybrid of Both Approaches	Sino-Western synthesis: Blending both cultures to explore a “national architectural style.”		

4. Decorative Art Characteristics of Modern Jingzhou Historical Buildings under Cultural Integration

Modern Jingzhou historical buildings can reflect the historical style and cultural characteristics, iconic and symbolic, record and carry the memory and emotion of local residents in a certain period of time, reflect the cultural exchange and mutual influence, and have a special commemorative significance or educational significance. The decorative art features of cultural integration of modern Jingzhou historical buildings are mainly manifested in the localization of architectural creation, diversification of architectural decoration, and eclecticism of architectural localization.

4.1 Building construction localization adaptation

4.1.1 Layout features

The Nanmen Catholic Church is located in a north-south orientation, with the south side as the main façade, contrasting with the brick and wooden houses of Jingzhou and the old city wall of the old Nanmen, but complementing each other. According to the Catholic tradition, the church is generally oriented east-west, and the west side is usually used as the main façade to ensure the needs of the liturgy, so it can be seen that the construction of this church was influenced by the traditional building methods of Jingzhou. The church belongs to the Basilica-style layout, with the main body of the building being rectangular in plan, the rows of columns dividing the plan into long spaces, a dome at the top, a nave in the center, and side porches on both sides. The whole is integrated with the local architecture to form a harmonious and integrated situation.

4.1.2 Elevation modeling features

The South Gate Catholic Church is a “Gothic” building, which usually has a soaring Gothic spire, pointed arches, helicoidal lines, and window panes with Biblical stories, as well as a majestic exterior and a vast interior. However, the whole building of the South Gate Catholic Church has been greatly simplified, without the complex forms of Western Catholic Church buildings, and the Gothic spire has been simplified into a bell tower. The façade modeling reliefs are also simplified and incorporate traditional Chinese tiles and auspicious cloud patterns (Figure 4). The windows and doors of the façade are arched structures, but the sense of hierarchy is compressed, and the rose windows are greatly simplified, with the forms borrowed from traditional Chinese door and window features.

Figure4: Southgate Catholic Church elevation modeling features



4.1.3 Architectural detailing and material construction

Nanmen Catholic Church is influenced by both Western religious culture and traditional Chinese architectural culture, and

there is a fusion of artistic features in architectural details and decorative elements, mainly reflected in the roof, doors and windows, carvings, interior decoration and material structure (Figure 5). Roofs, most of the roof forms of Jingzhou's modern historical buildings are sloped roofs, and the roof of the South Gate Catholic Church is a hard hilltop, or sloped roof, in the classification of traditional Chinese architectural roofs, which are suitable for the needs of Jingzhou's climate and easy to build. This shows that the Catholic Church was introduced to China and incorporated traditional Jingzhou residential architectural elements into the details of the building, harmonizing with the surrounding residential buildings and the ancient city walls. The windows and doors of the Catholic Church at the South Gate are rose windows, in line with "Gothic" architectural features, but the windows are reduced in size and simplified, and there are no tables of biblical stories on the windows. The pointed arches are simplified and replaced by wooden doors of traditional Chinese houses, decorated with traditional Chinese auspicious motifs. Material structure, Western church buildings are usually made of stone, supplemented by other materials, the South Gate Catholic Church is mainly a brick and wood structure. The rose window on the wall is made of wooden material to reduce the load bearing of the wall and also to reduce the self-weight, which is in line with the characteristics of Gothic architecture as well as the same material as the window of the traditional folk house in Jingzhou.

Figure5: Southgate Catholic Church Architectural Details and Material Structure



4.2 Diversified integration of architectural decoration

Decoration is an important part of the building, building decoration is generally reflected in the façade or components, whether it is in the Western architectural decorative style into the Chinese elements, or in the Chinese architectural decorative style into the Western features, basically take the eclectic style of the approach to the diversification of decorative elements into the background of the era, aesthetic tendencies, technological innovations, and the social outlook. Modern Jingzhou historical buildings with the Zhen silver building "foreign face" type of architectural decorative art is a typical representative of the integration of Chinese and Western. Not only in commercial buildings, but also in residential buildings, South Gate Street, No. 15 residential housing is also in the façade of the imitation of Western style, belonging to the traditional Jingzhou residents converted, the fusion of Chinese and Western decorative arts is perfectly presented.

4.2.1 Architectural detailing

The Tongzhen Silver Tower adopts a pagoda-style architectural pattern, and the Silver Tower as a whole has obvious Western

decorative elements, decorated with a large number of different columns, arches and scrolls, and other decorative forms used in Western classical architecture, as well as Chinese couplets, plaques, patterns and other decorative elements (Figure 6). This is a necessary process for Chinese and foreign architectural cultures to find a proper integration angle, and also reflects the acceptance and redesign of foreign architectural art and culture by the construction craftsmen at that time, which is more suitable for the needs of the times and aesthetic demands at that time. Columns, some of the columns of Tongzhen Silver Tower are the Corinthian columns of the three columns of ancient Greece, but they are obviously integrated with the characteristics of traditional Chinese architectural columns. The columns of Tongzhen Silver Tower are decorated on both sides of the door and support the triangular frieze, which no longer simply plays a load-bearing role, but is more of an artistic aesthetic and practical needs. Doors and windows of the Tongzhen Silver Mansion are decorated with arches and triangular friezes, and the mountain flowers are decorated with Western botanical patterns and traditional Chinese auspicious patterns. Carvings and patterns, with the Zhen Silver Tower building overall carvings and decorative patterns of the East and West, carvings are mainly in Western relief, patterns of Western and traditional Chinese decorative patterns. Couplets and plaques, plaques are an inevitable part of ancient Chinese architecture, mainly hung on the door screen as a decorative purpose, generally reflecting the name and nature of the building. Tong Zhen Silver House due to the type of commercial buildings and construction materials and other factors, the use of stone plaques and walls into a whole. The main door on the plaque engraved “with the Zhen” regular script characters, two to three floors between the plaque engraved “Zhejiang” two words clearly recognizable, the following three words have been blurred. The two plaques are surrounded by engraved plants, flowers, branches and grasses. There are three pairs of couplets in the building, and the couplets with the concept of doing business in good faith are written on the center pillar. The couplets on both sides of the main door are mainly store signboards, “Zhejiang Tongzhenlou Red Gold Shop”, which serves to maximize the purpose of advertising. There are also a pair of couplets on the outer most sides of the wall, depicting the business types of commercial silver building buildings.

Figure6: Architectural Details of Tongzhen Silver Building



4.2.2 Elevation Design and Construction Materials

Tong Zhen Silver Building building is three stories high with four friezes, the uppermost has a decorative hilltop, the main façade of the building is a symmetrical layout, the second to third floor of the middle columns are engraved on both ends of the honesty and integrity in business business business alliance as well as the center of the Chinese-style plaque. The upper part of the doors and windows of the first floor is of arched coupon structure, and the decorative patterns also show symmetry.

The wall columns on the façade cleverly offset the load on the side, and the overall building is similar to the traditional Chinese pagoda building, which is very characteristic. The main body of the building is made of reinforced concrete, the exterior walls are made of green bricks, the main street façade is made of Meiyu stone masonry and carvings, and the roof is flat. The building as a whole shows a baroque style and adopts a queer architectural form, with a clear hierarchy in the overall structure and exquisite materials, which meets the requirements of rational conception and visual aesthetics as a type of commercial building.

4.3 Localized eclectic presentation of the building

The most important thing about eclecticism is that it does not stick to the architectural characteristics of a certain era and does not focus on any one style, but integrates a variety of classical architectural forms in pursuit of novelty, which is also called “set of imitation”, which can be interpreted as a synthesis of styles from different eras and different sources^[10]. Against the background of changes in the Western architectural landscape and the awakening of nationalist consciousness, the first generation of Chinese builders used Western architectural research methods to study traditional Chinese architecture, exploring the eclectic architectural forms of modern Chinese nationalism. In modern Jingzhou architecture, Shashi Zhongshan Road Post Office was designed by Xi Fuquan, the first generation of Chinese architects. At that time, the overall design of the building was based on modernist concrete frame structure, basically conforming to the functionality and usage requirements of modern buildings in terms of space usage, adopting large-area windows for lighting, and adopting simplified classical Chinese architectural patterns in the façade, which belonged to the nationalist “eclectic” form of modern architecture. It belongs to the nationalistic “compromise” of modern architecture. As one of the outstanding representative buildings of the Republican period, Shashi Zhongshan Road Post Office is of great research and memorial value. The decoration of the façade has Chinese characteristics, such as the blocking columns of the street staircase, the holding drum stone, the base of the flagpole with auspicious cloud pattern, the roof with lotus pattern, and the architectural decorative components and line footings that reveal the details of traditional Chinese architecture everywhere.

Conclusion

The modern historical buildings in Jingzhou have unique artistic aesthetic characteristics of inclusiveness, diversity and eclecticism in the fusion of foreign and local cultures. The architecture of modern historical buildings in Jingzhou with the fusion of Chinese and Western cultures has an important value and practical significance for us to study the history, architectural art, and social culture at that time, and this process of generating buildings from contact, collision to fusion reflects the great inclusiveness of Chinese culture. However, in the investigation and research, we also found that part of the building protection is not ideal and other problems, respect and good treatment of old buildings in the city, preserving the city's historical and cultural memory is the responsibility of each of us. Nowadays, in the context of comprehensively advocating the strengthening of the protection of historical architectural heritage and the promotion of the great national spirit, we hope to make due contributions to the effective protection and rational utilization of Jingzhou's modern historical buildings.

Funding

no

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Reference

- [1] Dai, Z. W., Li, D. H.: Keeping the right and innovation, creating a new high ground for theory integration and dissemination - Jingzhou practice of Xi Jinping's cultural thought integration and dissemination. Press Outpost, 2024, (01), 4-5.
- [2] Huo, X. W., Ning, Z. Z., Kang, Z. Q., Xiang, B. J., Luo, D. Y., Li, Y.R.: Historical and Cultural Protection and Inheritance in the Yangtze River Basin. City Planning Review, 2023, 47(12): 61-64+71.

- [3] Chen, Y. Y.: Letting Jingchu Culture Blossom in the Modern Era. *Qiushi Journal*, 2023, (17): 73-74.
- [4] Men, Y. S.: Research on the Influence of Eclecticism on the Decorative Art of Modern Historical Buildings in Jingzhou. Yangtze University, 2017.
- [5] Guo, X. Y.: A Study of Horing Paper-Cutting from the Perspective of Cultural Fusion. Inner Mongolia University, 2022.
- [6] Li, D. D., Xu, Q. F., Liu, X. F., et al.: Integration and Symbiosis of "The Other" and "The Self": A Localized Study of the Architecture of the Catholic Church on East Dijie Street, Jingzhou Ancient City. *Chinese and Foreign Architecture*, 2023, (03): 24-28.
- [7] Lin, Z.: Great Simplicity to Ultimate Beauty. Beijing: China Youth Press, 2007.
- [8] Wang, Y., Liao, X.: Decorative Styles of Gatehouse Architecture in Nanxun Ancient Town Under Sino-Western Cultural Fusion. *Art Education Research*, 2023, (14): 142-145.
- [9] Zhang, Y. P., Yu, Z. C.: Research on the "Localization" Transformation and Evolution of Western Modernist Architectural Trends in China. *Urbanism and Architecture*, 2024, vol.21, no.09: 154-157+163.
- [10] Chen, W. Q.: Analysis and Reflections on Eclectic Architecture: A Case Study of Tianjin's Modern Buildings. *Construction Materials & Decoration*, 2019, (30): 104-105.

Philosophical Approach to Prove Affirmative Action's Morality

Boyou Chen*

University of Wisconsin Madison, Madison, 35756, United States of America

**Corresponding author: Boyou Chen*

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: In this paper, I will discuss whether Affirmative Action is moral or not. There are three main parts of this paper. The first one introduces the definition and motivation of Affirmative Action. The second is about certain perspectives that Affirmative Action is immoral. For the third part, I will criticize those perspectives and defend the argument that Affirmative Action is moral with reasons. At last, I would prefer to briefly mention the relation between Affirmative Action's motivation and outcome and develop a new question for future thinking.

Keywords: Philosophy; Affirmative Action; Ethical Theory; Morality

Published: Apr 22, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.223>

1.Introduction

"Affirmative action" means positive steps taken to increase the representation of women and minorities in areas of employment, education, and culture from which they have been historically excluded^[1]. In history, minor racial groups were unwillingly exploited by the dominant white people. Nevertheless, in essence, they economically contributed to society. For instance, Black people sold their labor to plantation owners almost without wage or to factory owners cheaply. Immorally speaking, this historical fact stimulated American society's primitive accumulation of capital. With the development of time, this contribution does not bring Black people a fair reward. As a result, Affirmative action tries to solve that issue by providing more opportunities to minor groups (not only Black people) and females.

2.Philosophical Arguments of Affirmative Action

2.1 Argument of Affirmative Action's immorality

For some philosophers, Affirmative action is immoral, because it's reverse discrimination. Affirmative action seems to sacrifice many white people's benefit whose socioeconomic status is similar to that of minority groups. Kenneth Simon wrote: With respect to individual fairness, not every black is an indirect victim of discrimination and not every white is an indirect beneficiary^[2]. This means we shouldn't attribute all of Black people's current situation to discrimination. Although Black people suffered a lot from slavery, racial segregation, and discrimination, most white people did not benefit from that. In other words, ordinary white people except the dominant class suffered in history as well. "Just as the previous discrimination did, this reverse discrimination violates the public equality which defines citizenship."^[3] By decomposing their articles, I summarize them through a premise-conclusion argument (Argument 1):

1.Any discrimination is immoral.

2. Affirmative action is discrimination against white people.

3. Therefore, Affirmative action is immoral.

2.1.1. Argument 1's Truth Value

This argument is valid, so I only need to provide more evidence to prove its soundness according to these philosophers' logic. For Premise 1, discrimination is definitely immoral, because it's unfair and unjust to treat a person negatively based on his or her racial and gender background or even deny this person's identity. As a result, Premise 1 is true. For Premise 2, Lisa Newton pointed out that "they commit the same injustice perpetrated by Jim Crow discrimination."^[4] For instance, in college admission, many universities would prefer to consider their racial diversity as an important element, so they intentionally send offers to students with minor racial backgrounds, even if their grades are lower than average. This is understood as Affirmative action that seeks to eradicate inequality based on racial identity. In this sense, Affirmative action sends a message to people that race doesn't matter, since Blacks, Hispanics, and other minor groups have equal opportunities as white people have. However, William Bennett and Terry Eastland indicated that it's unlogic, because "To count by race, to use the means of numerical equality to achieve the end of moral equality, is counterproductive, for to count by race is to deny the end by virtue of the means. The means of race counting will not, cannot, issue in an end where race does not matter."^[5] Their idea is that if we want to achieve the moral goal in society that race doesn't matter anymore through Affirmative action, the criteria should simply relate to applicants' ability instead of concern with minor racial background. This is because, for instance, if universities still consider race as a factor in student admissions, the statement that race doesn't matter anymore is obviously false. By developing this criticism that Affirmative action causes that race still matters, it's easy to find an inequality that violates white people's rights. Affirmative action confounded desert by severing reward from a "person's character, talents, choices and abilities"^[6] and by "subordinating merit, conduct, and character to race."^[7] From this perspective, those white people capable of college admissions or job positions fail to achieve what they deserve, and the reason is they aren't racial minorities. Thus, Affirmative action commits the same immorality perpetrated by Jim Crow discrimination. Consequently, Premise 2 is true based on all of the above.

2.2 Criticism Against Argument 1

In the third section of my paper, I will criticize Argument 1, but I prefer to check the definition of discrimination first. Philosophers who regarded Affirmative action as discrimination did not offer people a clear vision of what discrimination is. Instead, they mostly were writing in this way: A is discrimination, but B is not. Nevertheless, if we have no knowledge and rational understanding of discrimination, then it's inappropriate to intuitively attribute certain actions to discrimination. Firstly, discrimination is not a comparative concept essentially. For example, women in Somalia suffer greatly from famine, so all Americans who do not suffer from famine not only discriminate against African people but also women. This weird logic as Denise G. Réaume named is "leveling down objection."^[8] In fact, the discrimination we discuss here is "keeping minority groups in a subordinate position"^[9] through policies, social institutions, norms, class stratification, etc. If the rules of social institutions produce disproportionately disadvantaged outcomes for certain salient social groups, then discrimination exists.

After I clarified the definition of discrimination in Argument 1, Premise 2 is basically false. As the second paragraph proposed, Affirmative action's goal is to increase minor groups' representation in education and employment, but they mistakenly believed that Affirmative action generates discrimination against white people who are never in a subordinate position in the United States. We cannot say an action trying to bring equality to minor racial groups is "keeping white people in a subordinate status." In reality, Affirmative action won't produce disproportionately disadvantaged outcomes, even today, after decades of debate on Affirmative action.

2.3 Argument of Affirmative Action's Morality

When the rules of a society's major institutions reliably produce disproportionately disadvantageous outcomes for the members of certain salient social groups and the production of such outcomes is unjust, then there is structural discrimination against the members of the groups in question, apart from any direct discrimination in which the collective or individual agents of the society might engage. 44% of Black individuals have education levels below high school, while only 30% of White individuals have education levels below high school.^[10] Unadjusted differences evidenced moderate to large racial

and socioeconomic disparities in access to educational opportunity assessed through neighborhood-level early childhood education enrollment, primary school achievement, and secondary school attainment, with White children having greater access to neighborhood educational opportunity than their Black and Latinx peers.^[11] Based on that, it's hard to persuade anyone that Affirmative action is structural discrimination against white people. Exactly the opposite, racial disparity in education and employment is still a significant issue, and minor groups suffer a lot from fewer opportunities because of discrimination. As a result, my argument is (Argument 2):

1. Providing opportunities to historically marginalized groups is moral.
2. Affirmative action provides opportunities to historically marginalized groups.
3. Therefore, Affirmative action is moral.

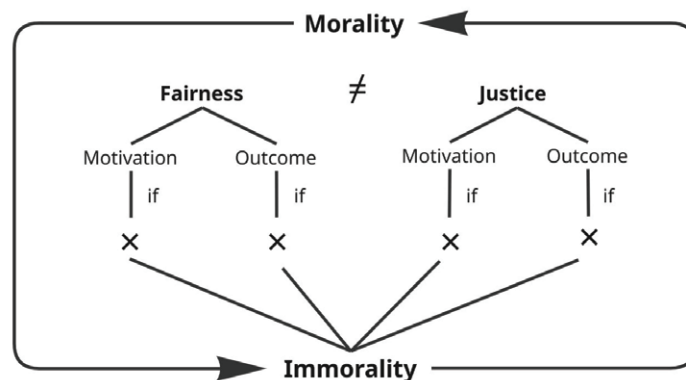
2.3.1 Argument 2's Truth Value

This argument is valid, so I just need to prove all of its premises are true. According to the definition of Affirmative action in the second paragraph, Premise 2 is already true. For Premise 1, it's necessary to indicate that racial minorities such as Black and Hispanic people were constantly under average socioeconomic level. As a consequence, their children were less likely to attend high school and college because of high tuition. In history, while white children sat in the classroom, Black children had worked in the factory already. Even if Black students were allowed to go to college, due to their economic and living conditions, there were many more limitations to them than white people. In addition, we shouldn't forget that it is precisely because of centuries of racial discrimination and slavery that minority communities are in their current situation. They were unwillingly exploited by the whole society which did benefit from their contribution to agriculture and industry. Nevertheless, white people treated them as properties, not humans. Providing them with opportunities is equal compensation to minor groups. Ultimately, I think I have proved Premise 2 is true.

2.4 A Different Perspective Regarding Morality

Last but not least, I hope to write some unusual thoughts related to not only Affirmative action but also morality. When people determine whether a behavior or an action is moral or not, the most common criterion is fairness and justice. As a result, fairness and justice are two main components of morality. However, I think morality is self-contradictory. This is because fairness cannot be equated with justice, and so reversely, which means a fair action is probably unjust, and a just action is probably unfair. For example, the French Revolution sought to bring fairness to civilians, but it killed numerous people in an unjust way. Then, future generations find it difficult to discuss the morality within the French Revolution. If an action is fair but unjust or just but unfair, we still refuse to believe that it is moral and be willing to extract its immorality. Even within fairness and justice, they harbor their own paradox. I decompose both fairness and justice into two parts: motivation and outcome. Everyone has this consensus that a good motivation won't always bring us a good outcome, and a bad motivation will bring a good outcome sometimes. I still take the French Revolution as an instance, Robespierre's motivation was good, but the outcome was bad. I draw a mind map to interpret this paragraph.

Figure 1. Transition from immorality to morality



If the concept of morality always contains its negation as immorality, which means it's difficult to use morality to judge anything, then is it possible to negate immorality by immorality in order to achieve morality? What I mean here is that we cannot analyze a thing, a behavior, and an action's morality in isolation, but should care of its connection to other things.

Morality never exists in a thing naturally. Additionally, according to the mind map, if morality contains immorality, we can reverse the whole thing that immorality contains morality within itself. It's not saying that if I kill an innocent person without any reason, then it's moral. Don't forget the connections between things. For example, Fascism Japan invaded Pearl Harbor in WWII and broke peace (immoral). In 1945, the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Japan and 100,000 – 200,000 people died. It's unfair and unjust to bomb citizens, because they shouldn't be held accountable for the actions of their government, which they cannot represent. As a consequence, dropping atomic bombs on Japan is immoral. Nevertheless, if the United States hadn't made that decision, millions of not only Americans but also Japanese would have died and Asians still suffered because of the continuation of war. Peaceful negotiation or protests (moral) was unable to solve the issue. Bombing Japan (immoral) is a negation of Fascism Japan (immoral). An immoral action negated another immoral action, immorality negated another immorality, and the result is peace, the end of the war, which is moral. Here, the result of negating immorality by immorality is morality. Going back to Affirmative action, those philosophers could call it as immoral as discrimination against white people, but this is also an immorality negating another immorality (centuries of racial discrimination and slavery), and the final result is a more equal and diverse society (moral). I found it helpful to try to know immorality in order to know morality, which means understanding immorality is exactly understanding morality. These two concepts are opposite, but they are always unified. The owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of the dusk.

3. Conclusion

Overall, Argument 1 (Affirmative action as immoral) is false, because it presupposes discrimination's definition including an unexisting detail: white people as minor groups are in a subordinate position. Providing opportunities and assisting people in need do not harm other groups' benefits. Also, in more radical thinking, even if we can call Affirmative action immoral, it's reasonable to discover the morality within immorality, which is common in a vast amount of historical events. Most importantly, the best pathway to understand morality is precisely immorality. That is to say, immorality will serve as the process to achieve morality; in other words, an objective movement exists between the two.

Funding

no

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References:

- [1] Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Affirmative action [EB/OL]. Stanford: Stanford University, 2001. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/affirmative-action/#ContEnga>
- [2] Simons K W. Philosophical perspectives on affirmative action [J]. Michigan Law Review, 1979, 77(3): 513–538.
- [3] Newton L H. Reverse discrimination as unjustified [J]. Ethics, 1973, 83(4): 312–320.
- [4] Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Affirmative action [EB/OL]. Stanford: Stanford University, 2001. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/affirmative-action/#ContEnga>
- [5] Eastland T, Bennett W J. Counting by race: Equality from the founding fathers to Bakke and Weber [M]. Washington D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1979.
- [6] Simons K W. Philosophical perspectives on affirmative action [J]. Michigan Law Review, 1979, 77(3): 513–538.
- [7] Eastland T, Bennett W J. Counting by race: Equality from the founding fathers to Bakke and Weber [M]. Washington D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1979.
- [8] Réaume D G. Discrimination and dignity [J]. Louisiana Law Review, 2013, 63: 644–695.
- [9] Pincus F L. Discrimination comes in many forms: Individual, institutional, and structural [J]. American Behavioral Scientist, 1996, 40(2): 186–194.
- [10] Sablich L. 7 findings that illustrate racial disparities in education [EB/OL]. (2016-06-06) [2025-04-19].
- [11] Coley R L, Carey N, Hwang D, et al. Racial inequities in educational opportunity: Variation across socioeconomic status [J]. Race and Social Problems, 2024.

Analysis of the Penetration Strategy of Mathematical Culture in Elementary School Mathematics Classroom Teaching under Core Literacy

Zhuoyu Zhao*

Zhejiang Normal University, Zhejiang, Jinhua, 321004, China

*Corresponding author: Zhuoyu Zhao

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: This study focuses on the infiltration path of mathematical culture in primary mathematics classrooms under the perspective of core literacy, and explores the synergy mechanism between disciplinary nurturing value and cultural inheritance. Aiming at the current phenomenon of cultural fragmentation in primary mathematics education, the study combines classroom observation and teaching case study to reveal the real dilemmas of teachers' cultural cognitive bias, lagging methodological innovation, insufficient development of resources, and single evaluation orientation. Based on the deep coupling of the three-dimensional objectives of core literacy and the connotation of mathematical culture, the study proposes systematic strategies such as reconfiguring the teaching design with cultural infiltration, revitalizing the classroom form with diversified interactions, broadening the penetration carriers with resource integration, and optimizing the cultivation of literacy with assessment and training linkage. The study breaks through the traditional technical teaching improvement ideas, constructs a new paradigm of mathematics education from the cultural and philosophical level, provides both theoretical value and practical significance for the implementation of the fundamental task of cultivating moral integrity, and helps the symbiotic development of students' quality of mathematical thinking and their sense of cultural identity.

Keywords: Core Literacy; Elementary School Mathematics; Mathematical Culture; Penetration Strategy

Published: Apr 22, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.291>

1.Introduction

Mathematics education is undergoing a paradigm shift from knowledge-based to literacy-based, and the penetration of mathematical culture under the guidance of core literacy has become a key entry point for deepening curriculum reform. As a basic subject that lays the foundation of thinking, primary mathematics carries the dual mission of spreading the spirit of reason and passing on human civilization, but the dilemma of losing cultural connotation is common in actual teaching. Teachers pay too much attention to problem-solving skills training, ignoring the history of mathematics, mathematical beauty and mathematical application of the value of mining, resulting in the classroom into a symbolic drill. This kind of instrumental rationality orientation cuts off the connection between mathematical knowledge and its cultural parent body, and weakens the realization of the discipline's nurturing function^[1]. This study is based on the intrinsic connection between core literacy and mathematical culture, analyzes the blocking factors of the integration of the two, and explores the practical path of cultural penetration, aiming at awakening the cultural self-awareness of the mathematics classroom, enabling students to

grasp knowledge and skills while comprehending the evolution of mathematical thinking, cultivating the scientific spirit and cultural comprehension, and realizing the development of mathematical education from the “material layer” to the “cultural layer”. The aim is to awaken students’ cultural consciousness in the math classroom so that they can master knowledge and skills, understand the evolution of mathematical ideas, cultivate scientific spirit and cultural understanding, and realize the qualitative leap of math education from the “object layer” to the “cultural layer”.

2.The relationship between core literacy and mathematical culture

Core literacy and mathematical culture show a close inter-constructive relationship in primary mathematics education. While core literacy emphasizes students’ key abilities and character for lifelong development, mathematical culture covers multiple dimensions such as mathematical thinking and methods, historical development, and social application, both of which point to the deep value of mathematics education. As a carrier for the cultivation of core literacy, mathematical culture helps students go beyond mere skill training to form rational thinking and innovative consciousness by revealing the logical system and humanistic connotation behind mathematical knowledge. For example, the exploration of classical problems in the history of mathematics can guide students to experience the process of knowledge formation and cultivate their critical thinking ability; the connection between mathematics and real life inspires students to use models to solve practical problems. At the same time, the core literacy framework provides a clear direction for the penetration of mathematical culture, prompting teachers to shift from the mere transmission of knowledge to cultural infiltration, and to incorporate the beauty of ideas and logic behind mathematical symbols into the design of teaching and learning. This two-way interactive relationship requires educators to explore the resources of mathematical culture in depth, but also need to accurately dock the core literacy goals, and build a symbiotic path between cognitive development and cultural experience in classroom practice.

3.Problems of mathematical culture penetration in elementary school mathematics classroom teaching under core literacy

3.1 Teachers’ insufficient knowledge of mathematical culture

In the core literacy-oriented elementary mathematics classroom, teachers’ insufficient knowledge of mathematical culture has become a key bottleneck restricting cultural penetration. Some teachers’ understanding of mathematical culture is limited to fragments of mathematical history or interesting stories, and they lack a systematic grasp of its philosophical implications, thinking paradigms and social values. Influenced by the test-taking mindset for a long time, teachers tend to simplify mathematics into formula derivation and problem training, ignoring the logical evolution and cultural accumulation behind the formation of mathematical concepts. This cognitive bias makes it difficult to break through the framework of instrumental knowledge transfer in teaching design, for example, the teaching of pi only emphasizes on numerical memorization and cuts off the subtle process of human exploration of infinity behind it, and the solving of quadratic equations stays in step-by-step exercises but shields the revolution of abstract thinking carried by algebraic symbols. The deeper problem lies in the fact that teachers’ own weak cultural reserves limit the depth of the classroom, and they are unable to guide students to appreciate the axiomatic system of mathematics and the beauty of its artistic structure. Although some teachers are aware of the importance of cultural penetration, they are limited by their lack of cross-disciplinary vision, making it difficult for them to transform the cultural links between mathematics and architecture, music and other fields into teaching resources ^[2].

3.2 Lack of vitality of single teaching method

The monotony of teaching methods in the current elementary mathematics classroom has significantly weakened the effectiveness of the penetration of mathematical culture. Teachers are accustomed to the linear model of lecture and practice, and overly rely on the mechanical reproduction of example problems from the textbook, resulting in the classroom being reduced to a programmed rehearsal of problem-solving steps. Taking the unit of “Preliminary Understanding of Fractions” as an example, most teachers only explain the concept of equivalent fractions by cutting physical models, but fail to guide students to trace the civilized wisdom of the ancient Egyptian unit fraction notation, or compare the differences between the Chinese and Western ancient fractions systems, thus missing the opportunity to deepen their mathematical understanding through cultural comparisons. Teacher-student interactions in the teaching process are mostly confined to question-and-

answer knowledge confirmation, and there is a lack of multi-approaches such as project inquiry and dramatic situation reconstruction, which makes it difficult to transform the conflicts and breakthroughs in the history of mathematics into tangible learning experiences. This solidified model suppresses the cultural generativity of the classroom, students passively accept the conclusions and cannot experience the process of knowledge re-creation, and the innovative consciousness and cultural understanding required by the core literacy are reduced to paper concepts. The lack of vitality in teaching methodology reflects the teachers' weak knowledge of cultural transformation ability, and it is urgent to build an open and diversified teaching form to activate the educational potential of mathematical culture.

3.3 Insufficient utilization of teaching resources

The depth of mathematical culture penetration in primary mathematics classrooms is limited by the superficiality of teaching resources development. Teachers generally regard textbook illustrations and after-school reading materials as the main body of cultural resources, and fail to systematically explore the potential value of mathematics history, interdisciplinary practice cases and digital resources. Take the teaching of "symmetrical figures" as an example, most classrooms only present standard geometric figures, but ignore the aesthetics of mirror symmetry in Dunhuang murals or the wisdom of topological transformations in the patterns of window panes in Suzhou gardens, leaving the cultural elements at the level of conceptual illustration. The selection of teaching resources is often separated from historical contexts and real-life applications. For example, the teaching of probability seldom introduces the primitive statistical thinking of oracle bone divination, and the unit on weights and measures seldom compares the social motivations for the evolution of ancient and modern units of measurement. A more prominent problem is that the integration of resources lacks regional cultural appropriateness, and the tenon and mortise structure of local traditional architecture and the logic of operation and research contained in folk games are not transformed into teaching carriers. The singularity and flattening of the use of resources not only weaken the infectious power of mathematical culture, but also lead to the cultivation of core literacy into an abstract sermon divorced from the cultural context.

3.4 Imperfect and unscientific evaluation system

The imperfection of the current evaluation system seriously restricts the organic penetration of mathematical culture in elementary school classrooms. The assessment mechanism dominated by score evaluation focuses excessively on calculation accuracy and problem solving speed, and neglects the examination of students' mathematical aesthetic experience, cultural comprehension and other dimensions of literacy. For example, the teaching evaluation of the "chicken and rabbit in the same cage" problem often stops at determining the correctness of the algebraic solution, and fails to design an assessment tool for observing students' cultural transfer ability to reconstruct the problem by using the original ideas of Sun Tzu's Mathematical Scriptures. The evaluation method mostly adopts standardized tests, and lacks the development of process evaluation carriers such as file bag records and cultural theme inquiry reports, which makes the key links in the formation of mathematical ideas, such as the verification of conjectures and cultural comparisons, a blind spot in the teaching and learning process. There is a structural disconnect between the evaluation content and the core literacy objectives. The unit on three-dimensional geometry rarely focuses on students' ability to interpret the cultural expression of the equations of the curved surfaces of the domes of Gothic buildings, and the teaching of statistical charts rarely examines students' data literacy in interpreting the patterns of the color distribution of Dunhuang murals^[3].

4. The Infiltration Strategy of Mathematical Culture in Primary Mathematics Classroom Teaching under Core Literacy

4.1 Optimizing Teaching Design to Integrate Cultural Literacy

Optimizing teaching design requires integrating mathematical culture into the knowledge construction process and designing cultural experience activities that meet children's cognitive characteristics. When recognizing shapes, traditional architectural elements can be introduced, for example, the block model of the Forbidden City's corner tower can be used to help students understand the stability of triangles, and the charm of three-dimensional geometry can be felt by building arch structures. Numbers can be taught by combining ancient counting methods, making oracle bone number cards, and allowing students to understand the evolution of decimal counting in deciphering Shang Dynasty field and hunting divination. The concept

of fractions can be introduced with the help of traditional festivals and cultures, such as the activity of distributing rice dumplings in the Dragon Boat Festival, so that students can experience the meaning of fractions in the actual distribution. Classroom can be set up “mathematical culture corner”, display abacus, sundials and other instruments, carry out “ancient shopping” role-playing, with the Kaiyuan Tongbao model of addition and subtraction operations, so that the history of monetary development and arithmetic skills training organic integration. Teaching design can be integrated into folk games, for example, upgrading the tangram board into the “Song and Yuan cargo ship assembly” task, students in the recovery of ancient sailing ship structure, naturally mastered the law of transformation of plane shapes. Mathematical elements in traditional arts should be explored, for example, analyzing the use of axisymmetric shapes in folk art in conjunction with paper-cutting activities, and using geometric color separation boards to design traditional tattoos. The application of digital tools should be in line with children’s cognitive characteristics. An interactive program is developed to simulate the ancient time-keeping system, so that students can intuitively understand the cultural origin of the concept of fractions and time measurement when adjusting the relationship between the speed of water flow and the scale. This kind of instructional design emphasizes the connection between life experiences and cultural wisdom. For example, mathematical problems can be contextualized by designing the task of “management of ancient grain silos”, so that students can understand the historical evolution of the unit of volume when calculating grain reserves ^[4].

4.2 Innovative Teaching Methods Activate Cultural Classroom

Innovations in teaching methods should focus on transforming mathematical culture into tangible activities perceivable by children. In recognizing numbers, a game of matching oracle bone numerical cards can be designed so that students can naturally understand the evolution of decimal counting when deciphering the quantity symbols in Shang Dynasty field and hunting divination. The creation of illustrated math books can lower the threshold of cultural cognition. For example, the bamboo folding problem in the Nine Chapters of the Mathematical Art of Arithmetic can be adapted into a story about a bear measuring the height of bamboo joints, and the principle of similar triangles can be demonstrated with the help of a three-dimensional flip book. Traditional festivals in the mathematical elements worth tapping, Dragon Boat Festival dumplings can be introduced into the “knot counting” practice, so that students in the bundling of reeds to observe the number of knots and three-dimensional geometry of the relationship between stability. Classroom can set up cultural experience corner, display abacus, sundial and other instruments, carry out “ancient shopping” role-playing, with the Kaiyuan Tongbao model for addition and subtraction operations, so that the history of monetary development and arithmetic skills training organic integration. Interdisciplinary project-based learning is of a practical nature. For example, students are guided to analyze the application of axisymmetric shapes in folk art in conjunction with the Chinese New Year window cuttings activity, and to use geometric color separation boards to design traditional patterns independently. The application of digital tools should be in line with children’s cognitive characteristics, and the development of an interactive program to simulate the ancient leakage timekeeping, students can intuitively experience the cultural origin of the concept of fractions and time measurement when adjusting the relationship between the speed of water flow and the scale. This kind of pedagogical innovation emphasizes the connection between life experience and cultural wisdom. For example, by upgrading the jigsaw puzzle to the “Song and Yuan Cargo Ship Puzzle” task, students can subconsciously grasp the law of transformation of planar shapes when restoring the structure of ancient sailing ships. When mathematical knowledge is presented through the cultural vehicle of storytelling and gamification, abstract formulas and theorems are transformed into palpable cultural heritage. For example, the game of digital scales restores the idea of equations in Sun Tzu’s Book of Arithmetic, and allows students to construct the concept of equations through the experience of weighing grains.

4.3 Integrating teaching resources to build a bridge of penetration

Optimizing teaching design requires integrating mathematical culture into the knowledge construction process and designing cultural experience activities that meet children’s cognitive characteristics. When recognizing shapes, traditional architectural elements can be introduced, for example, the block model of the Forbidden City’s corner tower can be used to help students understand the stability of triangles, and the charm of three-dimensional geometry can be felt by building arch structures. Numbers can be taught by combining ancient counting methods, making oracle bone number cards, and allowing students

to understand the evolution of decimal counting in deciphering Shang Dynasty field and hunting divination. The concept of fractions can be introduced with the help of traditional festivals and cultures, such as the activity of distributing rice dumplings in the Dragon Boat Festival, so that students can experience the meaning of fractions in the actual distribution. Classroom can be set up “mathematical culture corner”, display abacus, sundials and other instruments, carry out “ancient shopping” role-playing, with the Kaiyuan Tongbao model of addition and subtraction operations, so that the history of monetary development and arithmetic skills training organic integration. Teaching design can be integrated into folk games, for example, upgrading the tangram board into the “Song and Yuan cargo ship assembly” task, students in the recovery of ancient sailing ship structure, naturally mastered the law of transformation of plane shapes. Mathematical elements in traditional arts should be explored, for example, analyzing the use of axisymmetric shapes in folk art in conjunction with paper-cutting activities, and using geometric color separation boards to design traditional tattoos. The application of digital tools should be in line with children’s cognitive characteristics. An interactive program is developed to simulate the ancient time-keeping system, so that students can intuitively understand the cultural origin of the concept of fractions and time measurement when adjusting the relationship between the speed of water flow and the scale ^[5]. This kind of instructional design emphasizes the connection between life experiences and cultural wisdom. For example, mathematical problems can be contextualized by designing the task of “management of ancient grain silos”, so that students can understand the historical evolution of the unit of volume when calculating grain reserves.

4.4 Upgrading the Evaluation and Training System to Enhance Cultural Literacy

The upgrading of the teaching evaluation system needs to break through the traditional quantitative mode and build a cultural literacy-oriented multi-dimensional evaluation mechanism. Teacher training can add a mathematical culture workshop to guide teachers to design sundial-making projects and improve their cultural teaching ability in the practice of measuring the length of sunshades of festive seasons. A cultural perception dimension should be added to the classroom observation scale to record students’ spatial reasoning performance in recovering the arrangement of character molds of the Song Dynasty movable-type printing press and to focus on their innovative thinking in applying traditional wisdom to solve geometric problems. Student growth portfolios can include cultural-themed works, such as a mathematical model of a three-dimensional Spring Festival couplet made in conjunction with Chinese New Year customs, demonstrating the level of integration of symmetrical graphical understanding and folk aesthetics. School-based teaching and research activities can be carried out to evaluate lessons across disciplines, analyze the effect of cultivating a sense of quantity in the teaching of the Square Field Technique in the Nine Chapters of the Mathematical Art, and compare the differences in thinking between ancient and modern methods of area measurement. Teachers’ professional development evaluation should add indicators of cultural transformation ability, for example, assessing whether their teaching design of adapting the chicken and rabbit problem of Sun Tzu’s Arithmetic can guide students to reproduce the wisdom of the ancients in solving the problem using the drawing strategy. Schools can set up a database of mathematics culture teaching cases, including high-quality examples such as “The Beauty of Proportion in Dunhuang Frescoes”, and form school-based evaluation standards. Regional assessments can introduce open-ended cultural topics, such as analyzing the geometric principles of mortise-and-tenon joinery in traditional architecture, and writing math field trips to replace part of the written exam. This innovation in the assessment system makes cultural literacy visible and measurable, and when students are able to explain the multiplication and distribution law using the principles of beadwork, it is a sign that mathematical culture has penetrated from the surface of knowledge to the core of thinking.

5. Conclusion

The in-depth integration of core literacy and mathematical culture has opened up a new dimension of practice for the reform of primary mathematics education. Research has confirmed that through the implementation of systematic penetration strategies, the phenomenon of “two skins” between cultural elements and subject teaching can be effectively solved, so that the mathematics classroom can be revitalized with cultural vitality. The enhancement of teachers’ cultural consciousness has prompted the teaching design to break through the boundaries of technical rationality, the innovation of multiple teaching methods has reconstructed the knowledge transmission method, and the construction of three-dimensional resource network

has made the mathematical culture get a tangible dissemination carrier. More importantly, the upgrading of the evaluation system promotes the benign interaction between literacy cultivation and cultural infiltration, helping students to form a complete mathematical cognitive schema. This transformation of educational paradigm not only reshapes the ecological pattern of the mathematics classroom, but also responds to the proposition of “what kind of people should be cultivated” in a deeper sense. In the future, we need to further explore the adaptability of the strategies in different regional cultures, and continue to improve the construction of the math culture resource base, so that the core literacy can really be realized as the cultural genes and thinking qualities that students can feel and know.

Funding

no

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

- [1] Nasir N S, Hand V, Taylor E V. Culture and mathematics in school: Boundaries between “cultural” and “domain” knowledge in the mathematics classroom and beyond[J]. *Review of research in education*, 2008, 32(1): 187-240.
- [2] Burch P, Spillane J P. Elementary school leadership strategies and subject matter: Reforming mathematics and literacy instruction[J]. *The Elementary school journal*, 2003, 103(5): 519-535.
- [3] Haara F O, Bolstad O H, Jenssen E S. Research on Mathematical Literacy in Schools--Aim, Approach and Attention[J]. *European Journal of Science and Mathematics Education*, 2017, 5(3): 285-313.
- [4] Walshaw M, Anthony G. The teacher’s role in classroom discourse: A review of recent research into mathematics classrooms[J]. *Review of educational research*, 2008, 78(3): 516-551.
- [5] Desimone L M, Smith T M, Phillips K J R. Linking student achievement growth to professional development participation and changes in instruction: A longitudinal study of elementary students and teachers in Title I schools[J]. *Teachers college record*, 2013, 115(5): 1-46.

From “Art for Art’s Sake” to “Art for Life”: The Interpretation of Chang Shuhong’s Oil Painting Characters Artistic

Xuanmin Yue*

Northwest Normal University, Lanzhou, Gansu, 730070, China

*Corresponding author: Xuanmin Yue

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: Mr. Chang Shuhong, known as the “The Patron Saint of Dunhuang”, has devoted half of his life to the research and conservation of Dunhuang art, but is also a famous oil painter in China. During the special period of Chinese art field in the twentieth century, Mr. Chang Shuhong, as a pioneer in exploring the national style of oil painting, sought to integrate the language of oil painting with the national spirit through artistic practice. This paper takes Chang Shuhong’s characters oil painting as the object of interpretation, focusing on its oil painting nationalization of artistic thought and style, his early years during his stay in France has been a remarkable achievement, with rigorous and fine brushstrokes to express the beauty of the human body. After returning to China in the transformation of the Dunhuang art, will be the art of perception and respect set in the oil painting brush, portraying a number of national characteristics of the character, the masterpieces of figure oil painting have a special significance of the wrapped with the memory of the history and the national spirit.

Keywords: Chang Shuhong; Oil Painting; Characters; Nationalization

Published: Apr 24, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.237>

1.Introduction

“The Patron Saint of Dunhuang” is a term of high praise for Mr. Chang Shuhong, a renowned oil painter, Dunhuang scholar, and art educator in China (Figure 1) ^[1]. His lifetime coincided with a period of significant social upheaval in the twentieth century, marking a unique epoch in Chinese art. Following the 1911 Revolution, numerous young scholars embarked on a journey abroad to study advanced disciplines in Western science, technology, politics, and art. Chang Shuhong, motivated by his artistic aspirations, self-funded his studies in France, seeking knowledge about Western European art. Concurrently, he remained dedicated to exploring the national style of Chinese oil painting ^[2]. Upon completing his studies, Chang Shuhong returned to China, resolutely abandoning the favorable conditions he enjoyed in France to contribute to the development of art in his homeland. He transformed his passion for Dunhuang into dedicated research and preservation of its art, devoting decades of his life to this cause as if each day were an eternity.

2.“Art for Art’s Sake”

Born in 1904 in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, Chang Shuhong was a diligent young man. In 1918, he enrolled in the Zhejiang A-Specialty Industrial School, specializing in dyeing and weaving, and later became a teacher at the institution in 1923. In 1927, he traveled to France to study, attending the Lyon Fine Arts College and the Laurence Studio at the National Higher School of Fine Arts in Paris. During this time, he produced numerous masterpieces that garnered various international

awards and recognitions. His oil paintings encompassed a wide range of themes, particularly excelling in his representations of the human body. While living abroad, Chang Shuhong, motivated by a desire to revitalize Chinese art, was profoundly inspired by Dunhuang art. He returned to China in 1936 to teach at the National Beiping College, later becoming the director of the Dunhuang Art Research Institute in 1944. After returning to China, he devoted over 50 years to safeguarding and studying Dunhuang art, ensuring it remained deeply rooted in the cultural consciousness and allowing its splendor to be appreciated worldwide^[3]. While meticulously copying and studying Dunhuang murals, he also sought to transform Dunhuang art by integrating it with the zeitgeist of Chinese national culture, creating works that reflect national character imagery. His creations embody rich Oriental meanings and are the result of Mr. Chang's relentless quest for the true essence of art and innovation, demonstrating his steadfast convictions and pursuit of artistic excellence during tumultuous times^[4].

Figure 1: Mr. Chang Shuhong, famous oil painter, Dunhuang scholar and art educator



During his stay in France, Chang Shuhong was notably influenced by Western classical academic painting, leading to an emphasis on the human body as a vital subject of artistic expression. His oil painting style was profoundly shaped by Lawrence's concise and refined technique, which imparted an elegant and graceful classical aesthetic. Additionally, inspired by the ideals of French Romanticism, he incorporated the exuberance and passion of Delacroix's color palette, fusing it with the rational, serene aesthetic of neoclassicism. This synthesis formed Chang Shuhong's unique artistic style, which reflected the characteristics of Western realistic oil painting, with a focus on light, structure, and color in pursuit of realism, representing a typical Western "academy" style^[5]. However, during his stay in France, Chang Shuhong did not neglect his concern for Chinese oil painting. While studying, absorbing and borrowing from the West, he was also exploring the development of Chinese oil painting, so that the Chinese oil painting style could express the spirit of the nation and the spirit of the times, as well as creating a new form of art that combines with the artist's style.

The artworks from this period meticulously depict the emotions of each character through precise brushwork, expressing a sense of liveliness, whether quietly and elegantly or joyfully. For instance, in *Nostalgia Song*, created in 1931, the character is modeled after the artist's wife, Chen Zhixiu. This piece portrays a woman dressed in traditional Chinese attire, seated beside a scroll painting while playing the flute. The harmonious interaction between the realistic representation of the character and the decorative background effectively exemplifies the Chinese sentimentality inherent in the national cultural identity. The 1932 painting, *Portrait of Mrs. G*, depicts the image of a woman seated sideways, with delicate portrayal of the facial features, black bowler hat, long skirt and dark brown leather gloves set against the cool gray background, which further reveals the simplicity and clarity of the twisting and changing character silhouettes, highlighting the finely etched face and the elegant and noble gestures, which reveal a sense of steadiness and mystery. The overall shape of the work is rigorous, the light color is calm, but without losing the subtle changes, the artistic language is concise. The main character's expression conveys a slight fatigue, yet retains a sense of reserved dignity. Painted in 1933, *Lakeside* depicts a woman seated at the seashore. The

female figure in the artwork is modeled after Chen Zhixiu, who is shown sitting on the reef with a smile on her face, with the sea and distant mountains as the backdrop, and her nude body is placed in a natural light environment, which shapes a rich and full form. Painted in 1934, *Bust of an Elderly Man*, the character modeling of the picture is accurate, showing the hale and hearty state of the old man in an appropriate manner, the body, arms on the dark large blocks of the body, although abbreviated, but does not appear to be empty, but instead of light and dark treatment of looseness and contrast is clear. The picture is composed with color, mainly in gray tone, the old man's slightly reddish skin color complements the light green background, presenting the classical oil painting creation style. The 1934 artwork *Man's Body*, in which the man's muscles are shaped tightly and bones are depicted in a clear and strange way, the character's form is structurally accurate and full of masculinity, the composition is rigorous but not overly stereotypical, and the loose brushstrokes and thin coloring make the picture even more comfortable, which is very much in the style of classicist paintings. The 1935 work *Naked Woman* shows a woman reclining on a bench in a moving pose, with delicate three-dimensional features, a firm and full-bodied shape, clear and definite contours, soft and rounded complexion, and a woman's body that is unusually conspicuous in the interplay of light and color. It can be seen, Chang Shuhong in shaping the human body image, in focusing on the characters on the basis of rigorous modeling, more pursuit of the picture of light and color changes, the outline of Chinese painting and Western oil painting on the emphasis on the sense of volume and spatial structure of the arrangement of the integration, so that the characters in the paintings of the natural demeanor of stretching, the works from the image expression to the connotation of the flavor is more intriguing. From these works, we know that during the period of studying abroad, Chang Shuhong was influenced by both western impressionism and academism, and in the depiction of human body subjects during this period, he paid attention to the delicate techniques, harmonious color tones, precise structure, and strong contrasts between light and dark, reality and emptiness, which can be seen in Chang Shuhong's early profound artistic attainments and solid painting skills.

Art is ultimately an activity with national characteristics, art practice is bound to have a national color, projecting the combination of national characteristics and the spirit of the times of social life. Stay in France in the late Chang Shuhong, gradually focus on exploring the nationalized form of Chinese oil painting, such as the creation of the work in 1933, *Painter's Family* (Figure 2), is Chang Shuhong's early works of his own family portrait, the characters in the painting is Chang Shuhong with his wife and daughter three, they snuggle together, depicting a warm and peaceful, quiet and calm family atmosphere, Chang Shuhong hand holding the paintbrush and palette, white shirt and black tie and his wife's dark cheongsam form a strong contrast, and in the dark blue tone of the background. His wife's dark cheongsam forms a strong contrast, and in the dark blue tone background with a strong sense of rhythm, the cheongsam pattern is the most favorite and familiar to the Chinese people and has a strong Chinese national flavor of the blue calico, highlighting the oriental beauty of the national cultural symbols of the characteristics of the picture is located in the foreground of the daughter of the Chang Shana, with short black hair, naive and charming, the whole picture conveys a strong warmth, but also implies the spirit of the simple nationalities. Another example is the 1934 work *Mrs. D*, using classical realism to depict the characters, the woman wearing a white floral bowler hat, wearing a stone-green coat, wearing black leather gloves, simple and elegant tone, placing the characters outdoors, in stark contrast to the traditional Chinese landscape paintings, the characters and the background are almost in the same plane, weakening the three-dimensionality and spatial expression of the picture, but the focus is shifted to an attempt to "nationalize" the oil painting. Instead, the focus shifts to an attempt to "nationalize" the oil painting.

Chang Shuhong's early oil paintings, reflecting a bright and elegant artistic flavor, were praised as having the quiet and intimate realm of Laozi's philosophical thinking, in stark contrast to the art of the arduous and stoic period of his adherence to Dunhuang. However, during his time studying abroad, Chang Shuhong's gradual tendency to focus on society and life formed an artistic outlook that coincided with the realist artistic trend in China in the 1930s, and there was a sense of a ghostly echo that led Chang Shuhong to transform himself from a "painter of Montparnasse" into a "patron saint of Dunhuang" with a sense of mission. "Dunhuang patron saint", become a patriotic artist in a time of national crisis without thinking about the choice. Therefore, Chang Shuhong, with his infinite yearning for Dunhuang art, said goodbye to the favorable creative and living environment in Paris, and returned to his motherland where Dunhuang national art was hidden ^[6].

Figure 2: Chang Shuhong, *The Painter's Family*, oil on canvas, 100cm x 81cm, 1933



3. “Art for Life”

The harsh environment and turbulent life after returning to China made Chang Shuhong turn to portraits and landscapes as the theme of his creations, among which he created more than hundreds of portraits, depicting a wide range of subjects, from grass-roots peasants to great leaders, involving different people from all walks of life, and pursuing a national style of painting language^[7]. In his artworks, he gradually diluted the western painting style and color mood, and deliberately increased the characteristics of Chinese line drawings, and the concise pictures showed the Chinese painting's spontaneity. For example, *Street Girl* created in 1936, depicting the winter depression in the streets of Peiping, the background is made of large cold gray and brownish gray to show the decorative effect, in strong contrast to the short-haired little girl in the foreground of the picture, wearing a brown cotton jacket and holding a bamboo basket, the portrayal of the little girl's image is exceptionally clear under the accurate depiction of the outer contours, highlighting the strong decorative significance of the national oriental. The image of the little girl is especially clear under the accurate depiction of the outer contours, highlighting the characteristics of the national oriental mood with strong decorative meaning. Some of the recent works, such as *Two Sisters*, *Cat and Naked Girl*, *Portrait of Shana*, and *Dressing*, are representative of this kind of works, portraying the image of oriental women and presenting the artistic expression of oriental aesthetics.

The artwork *Two Sisters*, created in 1936, features Chinese red as the main color, supplemented by black, white and cyan. The white pattern of the cheongsam, the lotus pattern on the wall and the white and red petals on the curtains echo with each other, and the overall harmony of colors and national symbols of the picture further shows the aesthetic standard that implies the oriental flavor. In the distant view of the picture, two symmetrical Chinese paintings are hung on the wall, and a Chinese-style table is placed on the floor, building up an ideal Chinese-style hall scene. By appropriately integrating the formal and stylistic concepts of Western modern decoration into the elements of Chinese tradition, the work demonstrates a unique ethnic aesthetic flavor of the times. The artwork *Cat and Naked Girl*, created in 1937, adopts a realistic approach to portraying the female figure, and uses dark outline lines to strengthen the outline of the body, fully demonstrating the generalization and rhythmic nature of the flexible use of lines. At the same time, when outlining the figures, the thickness of the lines, the change of reality and the weight of the lines, the softness of the contour lines of the whole human body contrasts with the rigidity of the dividing lines of the curtains, the floor and the columns in the background, and the shaping ability of the lines is applied appropriately. The work *Portrait of Shana*, created in 1939, depicts the author, whose home was destroyed by an air raid, comforting the frightened Shana by dressing her daughter in a new dress in the hope of removing the shadows of the war through this work. The work uses classical painting expression to portray the characters, the image portrayal is extremely concise and evocative, and there is no projection from the light source in the picture, and the clothing of the characters, the tiles on the floor, and the background image are flat, but it still shows a strong sense of the overall space. In the painting,

Shana sits on a rattan chair wearing new clothes and sandals and holding a doll, creating a cozy children's room full of childlike innocence and showing Chang Shuhong's strong fatherly love even in his busy schedule. The flowers on Shana's clothes are clearly outlined with lines, with the beauty of oriental patterns, and the background wall also depicts interesting children's pattern elements through flat coloring, together with the bright and colorful picture, which is an exploration of the modernity of the transformation of the national language. Also, for example, the artwork *Dressing* created in 1939 shows a woman combing the hair of a nude woman, the figure is depicted through realistic techniques, while the table, the floor and the wall are represented by geometric symbols, weakening the realism and volumetricity of the space and enhancing the mechanical aesthetics of the picture, so as to make the decorative and flatness of the space form a visual aesthetic of unique impact and highlight the elegance of reconciling the modernized concept of form with the national decorative mood. This highlights the elegance of reconciling the modernized concept of form with the national decorative mood. And then artworks such as *Women's Portrait*, *Family Portrait*, *Chongqing Bombardment*, *The Earth*, *Sichuan Peasants* and other artworks, is Chang Shuhong and the creation of the object of cordial communication after the subjective emotion of the true flow, further strengthen the overall decorative picture and sense of flatness, indicating that Chang Shuhong in the creation of the road of Chinese oil paintings, and continue to explore the use of traditional Chinese painting methods, the formation of Chinese sentiment Characteristic oil painting system style.

The time came to 1942, for Chang Shuhong, is an important turning point in life. In the fall of this year, Chang Shuhong led the preparations for the Dunhuang Art Institute and his party embarked on the road to Dunhuang, accompanied by the yellow sand, the sound of the camel bells, along the ancient Silk Road in February 1943 arrived in Dunhuang, began a long period of more than 40 years of Dunhuang protection and research work, during the period of the Dunhuang art copying, protection of the work of the main, but in the work of the other side, he also created a lot of northwestern characters. During this period, although he was mainly engaged in the heavy work of copying and protecting Dunhuang art, he also created many oil paintings on the theme of the faces of Northwest China. These works of art during the period of work in Dunhuang drew on and absorbed the high skills of Dunhuang art, in terms of color expression, painting language, form and structure, decorative meanings, etc., such as the color tends to be more brilliant and heavy, elegant and deep, the language of painting is also more oriental, the combination of decorative line and surface and pictorial techniques and other artistic expression of his deep feelings for Dunhuang and even the people of the northwest region, reflecting his deep emotions. These artistic expressions express his deep feelings for Dunhuang and even the people of Northwest China, reflect his high artistic attainments, and at the same time serve as a revelation and guidance for Northwest China Plateau Oil Painting, which expresses the warmth and freedom of ethnicity. For example, in the 1944 artwork titled *The Beginning of Copying Work*, the image carries significant ethnic connotations. It draws from the study of mural paintings conducted by two young female artists, utilizing flat red color blocks to represent tablecloth motifs infused with ethnic characteristics. The backdrop features Dunhuang mural paintings that depict scenes of Kabuki Bodhisattvas dancing and interacting, predominantly employing ochre and stone green hues.

After researching and comprehending the ethnic language in Dunhuang murals, Chang Shuhong continued to explore the plane and decorative language [8], advocating the expression of the dynamics and demeanor of the characters in his works, and silently integrating the music and dance scenes of Dunhuang's sutra paintings into the picture space of the characters in a multi-perspective way, forming a cross-cultural, cross-temporal, and intimate dialogue. Works such as *Dunhuang Farmer and Portrait* are all in-depth combinations of Dunhuang art and ethnic painting, reflecting the decorative language of the northwest ethnic style to the extreme. The artwork *Dunhuang Farmer* created in 1947 is a typical representation of western characters, depicting a Northwest Hui farmer wearing a white national hat. The picture portrays a simple and honest farmer with dark and reddish cheeks, wearing a blue cotton jacket, with his hands naturally resting on his knees, and his eyes gazing into the distance, and through the outlining of contour lines, it clearly separates the character from the scene of farming under the Three Dangerous Mountains of Dunhuang behind him. Through the outline line, the character is clearly separated from the scene of farming under the Sanqi Mountain in Dunhuang behind him, and the character and the local customs are closely combined and clearly expressed. The same 1947 work, *Portrait*, ignores the accuracy of the proportions and structure of the characters in the modeling of the picture, and instead uses lines to cut into all corners of the picture, in an attempt to find the

most profound and majestic lines in the Chinese national tradition, and whether inserting them into a realist subject matter can produce new visual ripples and shocking significance. Chang Shuhong's easy strokes and warm colors in his figure works at this time were the fruit of being deeply imbued with the Northern Wei style of painting and Dunhuang art, thus completely rejecting the characteristics of Western classical realism, and such works as *Portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Zhang*, *Portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Huang*, *Kazakh Woman*, *Uyghur Girl in Xinjiang*, *Old Peasant in Dunhuang*, *In the Mongolian Yurt*, etc., all of which were painted from 1948 to 1954. As well as the portraits of Chairman Mao Zedong and Commander-in-Chief Zhu De created for the troops stationed in Xinjiang, etc., perfectly combined the fusion painting method of ancient China a thousand years ago with the oil painting art of Western countries, forming the ideological interest and emotional expression deeply infused with Chinese traditional culture, and becoming an important achievement of China's modern exploration of the national style of oil painting. For example, the work *Kazakh Women* was made in 1953, in which Kazakh women are sitting on a fine carpet with porcelain bowls in their hands and wearing gorgeous clothes, behind them is a gorgeous tent wall carpet, and beside them is a stove and a copper kettle for cooking ghee tea, the whole piece of work is better than the previous works in terms of the decorative expression of color, with a high purity of color, and the simplicity with a wild style of painting fully demonstrates the national style and charms of the Kazakhs in the Northwest China. The painting style fully demonstrates the ethnic flavor and charm of the Kazakh people in Northwest China. Painted in 1954, the work *In the Mongolian Yurt* (Figure 3) depicts a scene of three Kazakhs roasting around a fire and drinking milk tea. In this work, Chang Shuhong, while borrowing the experience of Western classical oil painting in terms of realism and expressiveness, integrates the decorative meaning and linear expressiveness of Dunhuang murals into the structural modeling of the characters as well as the decorative motifs of the carpet and the tent and emphasizes the three-dimensionality of the linear form through the thickness, intensity and light color of the lines, highlighting the artistic language characteristics of lines that are very general, strong and deep in the works of realistic subjects.

Figure 3: Chang Shuhong, In the Yurt, oil on canvas, 76cm×108cm, 1954



After many years of profound influence of Dunhuang art, Chang Shuhong's oil paintings of human subjects completely completed the localization of transformation and transformation, artistic style tends to mature and stable, with obvious national spiritual color and personal creative style, almost no trace of Western classical realism. The artworks are also very different from the style of the early stay in France, such as the 1958 Dunhuang art exhibition held in Japan when the oil paintings *Portrait*, *In 1959*, he visited India and made oil paintings such as *Sketch of the President of India*, *Indian Workers*, and *Ode to the Cafeteria* in 1960, etc. In 1963, he produced a piece titled *Accordion Girl*, which depicted a young girl wearing a white blouse on top and an orange blossom skirt underneath, and she was concentrating on playing the accordion.

The background space of the picture is more decorative, and the color is no longer the classical grey tone, the purity is further increased, and the slogan “Learn from Comrade Lei Feng” inscribed by Chairman Mao hangs on the background wall, which is full of the strong atmosphere of the times. Chang Shuhong’s artwork depicting Chairman Mao Plum Blossoms Rejoice in the Sky of Snow created in Dunhuang in 1972, and his large-scale oil paintings Portrait of Mao Zedong and Portrait of Hua Guofeng created in Lanzhou in 1976 can be said to be a perfect summary of the history of his creation of figure paintings. At this time, the subject matter of the works is closer to the national life and nature, although the romance and elegance of the French style has been faded, the simple and unadorned picture and the content of the local flavor add more national affinity and more national identity, the concise and subtle use of the brush makes the picture quiet and poetic, the color treatment is harmonious and unified by visual experience, and the use of lines and colors that are connected with each other makes the picture natural and elegant, and the unrelated and complicated subjective feelings such as delicacy, excitement and intensity are calmly integrated into the picture, which makes the oil paintings show more national styles.

4. Conclusion

Looking back to Chang Shuhong’s figure subject oil painting art road, with his life experience and constantly evolving. Chang Shuhong in the 1930s, although in a foreign country to learn advanced western oil painting techniques, but always concerned about the development of the motherland’s oil painting, determined to create a new picture of Chinese oil painting art with the times and nationalities, exploring the relationship between the national spirit and culture and the fusion of personal artistic style. After returning to China, Chang Shuhong mostly used national characters as the subject matter for creation, the picture structure is more accurate, the coordination of light and color performance is extremely natural and comfortable, while focusing on the depiction of natural objects of life, emphasize the national ornamentation and fine pattern outlining, the national decorative and formal aesthetics of the fusion of each other, so that the characters in the paintings to show the hidden oriental spiritual feelings, expressing the painter’s open and rational attitude of creativity ^[9].

During the special period of the twentieth century in the field of Chinese art, Chang Shuhong, as a pioneer in exploring the national style of oil painting, sought through artistic practice to integrate the language of oil painting with the national spirit ^[10]. In order to protect, study and promote the art of Dunhuang, he decided to return to his homeland. On the basis of the profoundness of Dunhuang art and the self-improvement of the national spirit, his figure oil paintings combine the essence of Western art with traditional Chinese art, harmonize the language of Western classical realism with traditional Chinese decorative art style, and create works that are fundamentally based on the lives of local ethnic people, thus forming their own unique national artistic outlook. Throughout the figure oil painting works, the art of elegant but not deceiving, simple but not kitsch, natural picture expression and resonance of thought and emotion, is the most in line with the vast masses of people’s appreciation of the pursuit. Chang Shuhong believes that valuable art should be produced from the depths of the heart, he will be artistic perception and reverence set in oil paintings, portraying a large number of national characteristics of the characters, figure oil paintings is the masterpiece of his true feelings of the actual flow of the test and more and more brilliant. These works not only provide the most favorable guidance and inspiration for current and future artistic creation, but also have a special significance wrapped in historical memory and national spirit.

Funding

no

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Reference

- [1] The Patron Saint of Dunhuang. Excerpted from The People's Artist Magazine, Issue 12, 2022.
- [2] Yang, Y.: “Decoration” as a Way of Expression: Chang Shuhong’s thoughts on decorative art and exploration of nationalizing oil painting in the 1930s and 1940s. *Art*, 2024, 02, 76-87.
- [3] Chen, M.-Y., Wang, Z.-C.: An analysis of the artistic thought of Chang Shuhong, “the Patron Saint of Dunhuang” --Research series on the pioneers of modern Chinese design education. *The Artists*, 2023, 04, 126-128.

- [4] Zhao, S.-L.: Chang Shuhong's contribution to the modern art of China. *Dunhuang Research*, 2006, 01, 12-15+115.
- [5] Bi, B.-C.: Research on the artistic style of Chang Shuhong's oil painting. Northwest Normal University, 2020.
- [6] Wu, Z.-J.: Analyzing the national style of Chang Shuhong's early oil paintings. *Art Education Research*, 2012, 07, 26-27.
- [7] Yang, L.: Chang Shuhong's nationalization of oil painting language. Shandong Normal University, 2024.
- [8] Liu, X.-Y.: Decoration and painting--Discussion of Chang Shuhong's decorative art ideas. *Ornamental*, 2005, 11, 84-85.
- [9] Zhang, T.-Y.: Chang Shuhong, the guardian of Dunhuang--Interview with Chang Shana, daughter of Chang Shuhong. *Art Observation*, 2005, 01, 33-36+2.
- [10] Yuan, F.-X.: Analysis of Chang Shuhong's artistic concept. *Art Panorama*, 2011, 12, 68.

Research on the Heritage Strategies of Chinese Furniture Artistry under the Concept of Sustainable Design

WU Fan¹, XIAO Congrong^{2*}, ZANG Wangshuang¹

1. Software Engineering Institute of Guangzhou, Guangzhou, 510000, China

2. Department of Xcultural Studies, Graduate School of Kookmin University, Kookmin University, Seoul, 02707, Republic of Korea.

**Corresponding author: XIAO Congrong*

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: In the context of globalization and the ecological crisis, the heritage of Chinese furniture artistry faces significant challenges, including the loss of traditional craftsmanship, the distortion of cultural symbols, and an imbalance in sustainable development. This study, framed within the concept of sustainable design, combines perspectives from political ecology and the philosophy of technology to propose a systematic strategy for addressing these issues. By integrating modern technological advancements with traditional craftsmanship, reinterpreting cultural symbols through contemporary design language, and implementing sustainable design practices—such as using eco-friendly materials and optimizing production processes—this research aims to revitalize Chinese furniture artistry. The study not only provides theoretical support for the inheritance of Chinese furniture artistry but also offers practical guidance for its sustainable development, ensuring its long-term survival and relevance in modern society.

Keywords: Chinese Furniture Artistry; Sustainable Development; Cultural Symbols

Published: Apr 24, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.241>

1. Introduction

Furniture art is a material, spiritual, and cultural treasure condensed from the development of human society. The development of Chinese furniture culture presents a form change from low to high, which matured in the Song Dynasty and condensed thousands of years of craftsmanship wisdom through innovations such as the Ming Dynasty mortise and tenon system and the Qing Dynasty lacquerware inlay technology^[1]. As an important component of intangible cultural heritage, these traditions face survival threats in the post industrial era. The 2003 UNESCO Convention emphasizes the fragility of such heritage, highlighting that 63% of China's traditional crafts lack systematic protection mechanisms, and contemporary reinterpretations often distort cultural semantics into shallow "Sinicized" aesthetics.

The sustainability crisis is manifested through two interrelated aspects:

- (1) Cultural dislocation: The rupture between the symbolic system of traditional copywriting (such as auspicious patterns in Ming Dynasty furniture) and modern design language has led to excessive homogenization of related cultural heritage, with most "New Chinese" products using traditional patterns indiscriminately.
- (2) Technological innovation: Traditional manual production methods are difficult to adapt to Industry 4.0 standards,

resulting in low efficiency in furniture materials, processes, and other production aspects. New technologies and materials have emerged that can be combined and applied in furniture design solutions, such as 3D printing technology and generative artificial intelligence.

2. Current Dilemmas in Heritage Practices

2.1 Loss of Traditional Craftsmanship: Technology Replacement and Talent Shortage

The inheritance of Chinese furniture craftsmanship faces dual pressures from technological substitution and intergenerational talent gaps. Historically, Ming and Qing furniture exemplified the pinnacle of artisanal mastery, with mortise-and-tenon structures and lacquer inlay techniques reflecting a symbiotic relationship between human skill and natural materials^[2]. However, the advent of Industry 4.0 has disrupted this equilibrium. While CNC machining and 3D printing improve production efficiency, they often marginalize handcrafted precision, leading to homogenized designs that lack the cultural depth of traditional pieces.

A key challenge lies in the erosion of tacit knowledge dissemination. As pointed out in the UNESCO report, most of China's intangible cultural heritage lacks systematic documentation, and the number of apprentices has decreased due to the younger generation placing modern professions above manual trade. For example, the complex Arhat bed making technology in Suzhou was once passed on by masters and apprentices, but now there are less than 20 certified workshops in China. Market forces have exacerbated this talent vacuum: mass-produced furniture dominates consumer preferences, downgrading handmade products to niche luxury markets.

2.2 Alienation of Cultural Symbols: Misinterpretation in Modern Design

The semantic dislocation of cultural symbols in contemporary furniture design reveals a tension between tradition and modernity. Classical motifs such as ruyi (auspicious cloud) patterns and qilin (mythical creature) carvings, historically laden with cosmological and ethical meanings, are frequently reduced to decorative elements in "New Chinese Style" products^[3]. A 2023 survey of 120 furniture brands found that 58% misapplied traditional patterns, divorcing them from their original contexts—for example, using dragon motifs on office desks purely for aesthetic appeal rather than imperial symbolism.

This phenomenon stems from two factors:

- (1) Cultural Decoding Deficits: Designers often prioritize marketability over symbolic fidelity, resulting in hybrid forms that conflate Ming minimalism with Baroque ornamentation.
- (2) Commercialization Pressures: Heritage commodification, as seen in the proliferation of "Chinoiserie" furniture for global markets, dilutes cultural specificity to cater to exoticized consumer expectations.
- (3) Such practices risk transforming cultural symbols into hollow signifiers, undermining their role as carriers of collective memory.

2.3 Sustainability Imbalance: Resource Consumption vs. Ecological Protection

Traditional Chinese furniture-making, deeply rooted in cyclical material use, such as repurposing aged timber, now faces significant challenges due to the linear consumption patterns of industrial capitalism. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, artisans prioritized durable hardwoods like zitan and huanghuali, which required centuries of growth but ensured longevity and cultural value. In contrast, modern production relies on accelerated timber extraction, contributing to deforestation. China's furniture industry currently accounts for 12% of global wood consumption, with only 35% sourced from certified sustainable forests^[4].

Ecological conflicts are further exacerbated by the widespread use of chemically intensive finishes and non-recyclable composites. A 2022 study on furniture clusters in Zhejiang revealed that 60% of workshops still rely on formaldehyde-based adhesives, directly contravening the principles of circular economy. While innovations such as bamboo composites and blockchain-enabled material traceability offer promising solutions, their adoption remains limited due to high costs and insufficient policy incentives^[5].

This tripartite crisis—craftsmanship erosion, symbolic distortion, and ecological strain—underscores the urgent need for a holistic reevaluation of heritage strategies, as explored in subsequent chapters.

3.Theoretical Framework Construction

3.1 Political ecology: Systemic Interaction between Craft and Environment

Political ecology^[6], an interdisciplinary field, studies culture through the interaction of human, natural, social, and cultural variables. Proposed by American scholar J.H. Steward in 1955, it focuses on how cultural characteristics and patterns emerge and evolve within specific environments. In the context of Chinese furniture artistry, political ecology emphasizes the interconnectedness of craftsmanship with its surrounding environment, including natural resources, social culture, and economic conditions. Ancient Chinese furniture artisans utilized high-quality woods like huanghuali and zitan, showcasing a deep respect for sustainability and resource conservation inherent in traditional Chinese culture. The design of this furniture often aligned with traditional Chinese ecological perspectives, emphasizing harmony with nature and multifunctionality. This perspective advocates for a holistic view where the protection of wood resources, the inheritance of craftsmanship culture, and the adaptation to market demands are all considered to achieve sustainable development.

3.2 Philosophy of Technology: Ethical Reflection on Traditional vs Modern Techniques

The philosophy of technology provides a lens to examine the ethical implications of integrating traditional and modern techniques in Chinese furniture artistry. This field, nurtured by both continental and analytic philosophical traditions, explores the nature, development, and impact of technology on society and culture. When considering the heritage of Chinese furniture artistry, it prompts us to reflect on the values and ethics embedded in both traditional craftsmanship and modern technological advancements.

Traditional techniques, such as intricate wood carving and mortise-and-tenon joints, embody the wisdom and cultural values of craftsmen. In contrast, modern technology represents efficiency and innovation. The challenge lies in finding a balance where neither tradition is overshadowed by progress nor innovation is stifled by adherence to the past. This ethical reflection guides the integration process, ensuring that technological advancements do not compromise the cultural integrity and ethical dimensions of traditional craftsmanship.

3.3 Sustainable Design Triad: Cultural Continuity, Technical Innovation, Ecological Harmony

The sustainable design triad offers a comprehensive framework for the sustainable development of Chinese furniture artistry. Cultural continuity ensures the preservation of the core cultural genes of traditional furniture artistry, passing down the rich symbolism and aesthetic values found in patterns, shapes, and colors. Technical innovation involves combining modern technological means with traditional craftsmanship to enhance production efficiency and product quality. This can include digital technologies like 3D scanning and modeling, as well as advanced materials science. Ecological harmony requires the use of eco-friendly materials and processes to minimize the environmental impact of furniture production. By addressing these three interconnected aspects—culture, technology, and ecology—the sustainable design triad provides a balanced approach to revitalizing Chinese furniture artistry while ensuring its long-term survival and relevance in a modern, environmentally conscious world.

4.Sustainable Heritage Strategies

4.1 Technology Integration Strategy

Integrating modern technology with traditional Chinese furniture craftsmanship can breathe new life into this ancient art form. First, digital technologies like 3D scanning and modeling, CNC machining, and laser engraving can significantly enhance the precision and efficiency of traditional craftsmanship. For example, intricate wood carvings that once took craftsmen weeks to complete by hand can now be achieved in a fraction of the time with CNC routers while maintaining high levels of detail. Second, modern materials science can contribute to the development of new materials that can replace traditional wood resources. Researchers are exploring high-strength composite materials and recycled materials that not only reduce pressure on the ecological environment but also offer new aesthetic possibilities for furniture design. By combining the best of both worlds, we can preserve traditional craftsmanship while pushing the boundaries of innovation.

4.2 Cultural Symbol Reinterpretation Strategy




Reinterpreting cultural symbols through contemporary design language is crucial for keeping Chinese furniture relevant

in modern contexts^[7]. Designers should delve deep into the cultural connotations of traditional furniture elements and then reinterpret them in ways that resonate with today’s consumers. For instance, traditional patterns like the “shou” character (symbolizing longevity) or cloud motifs can be simplified and abstracted for use in modern furniture designs. Shapes can be innovatively reimagined while retaining cultural essence—think of a Ming-style chair reinterpreted with clean, minimalist lines for a contemporary aesthetic. Color palettes can also be updated to suit modern interior trends while still reflecting traditional Chinese color philosophies. This approach ensures that Chinese furniture remains culturally rich yet fashionably current.

4.3 Design strategy for expanding users

Implementing user-oriented redesign strategies means creating a market-driven model for Chinese furniture development^[8]. This involves understanding the diverse needs of different user groups, especially children, who represent not only a significant market segment but also the future of furniture consumption. By focusing on children’s furniture design, we can better meet their specific requirements for safety, functionality, and aesthetics. For instance, using non-toxic and child-safe materials ensures the well-being of children, while colorful and playful designs attract their attention. Additionally, modular and adjustable furniture designs can accommodate children’s growth, extending the product’s lifecycle and enhancing its market appeal. This targeted approach not only broadens the user base for Chinese furniture but also injects new vitality into its sustainable development in the modern market.

Table 1 Tripartite Strategic Framework for Sustainable Heritage of Chinese Furniture

Strategy	Key Methods	Cultural Innovation	Challenges	Case Examples
Technology Integration	3D scanning & AI-assisted pattern recognition.	Driven by the culture of “clerical script”	Risk of deskilling artisans High initial R&D costs for composite materials	
Cultural Reinterpretation	Driven by Chinese character culture	Driven by the culture of seal script	Potential cultural dilution Balancing abstraction vs. recognizability	
Expand user base	Modular children’s furniture	Embodies Daoist ziran (naturalness) through circularity	Scalability of traditional furniture in modern design and consumer acceptance of remanufactured products	

5.Results and Discussion

5.1 Policy-Industry-Academia Collaborative Mechanism

The collaborative mechanism involving government, industry, and academia is crucial for the sustainable development of Chinese furniture artistry. The government plays a pivotal role in formulating supportive policies, such as financial incentives for traditional craftsmanship preservation and sustainable design innovation. For instance, tax breaks for enterprises investing in sustainable furniture production can encourage more players in the industry to adopt eco-friendly practices. Meanwhile, the industry should actively seek partnerships with academic institutions to leverage their research capabilities. Collaborative projects can be established where universities provide expertise in material science or digital technologies, while enterprises offer practical insights and market orientation. This synergy not only accelerates the translation of research into applicable solutions but also ensures that the industry remains competitive and innovative. Furthermore, joint training programs can be developed to cultivate talents equipped with both traditional craftsmanship and modern technological skills, addressing the current talent shortage in the field.

5.2 Craftsmanship Innovation Center Case Study

The establishment of a Craftsmanship Innovation Center serves as a practical example of revitalizing Chinese furniture artistry. This center acts as a hub where craftsmen, designers, and researchers converge to explore new techniques and design concepts. Workshops and apprenticeship programs are organized to pass down traditional skills to the younger generation, ensuring the continuity of precious craftsmanship. For example, master craftsmen can demonstrate intricate wood carving techniques while trainees practice under guidance, blending hands-on learning with theoretical understanding. Additionally, the center facilitates design competitions and exhibitions, providing a platform for showcasing innovative works that merge tradition with modernity. These activities not only stimulate creativity but also raise public awareness and appreciation for sustainable Chinese furniture design. Moreover, collaborations with enterprises enable the commercialization of research outcomes, creating a virtuous cycle where innovation is rewarded and further investment in research is encouraged.

5.3 Sustainable Value Chain Construction

Constructing a sustainable value chain is essential for the long-term viability of Chinese furniture artistry. This involves a comprehensive approach that considers every stage of a product's life cycle. In the material sourcing phase, prioritizing sustainable certified wood or recycled materials reduces environmental degradation. For example, partnering with forestry stewardship organizations ensures that the wood used comes from responsibly managed sources, promoting ecological balance. During production, optimizing processes to minimize waste and energy consumption is achieved through techniques like lean manufacturing and the adoption of energy-efficient equipment. This not only lowers costs for enterprises but also decreases their carbon footprint. In the use phase, designing furniture for durability and adaptability ensures that products remain functional and aesthetically relevant over time. Modular designs that allow for easy upgrades or repairs can extend the lifespan of furniture pieces. Finally, establishing efficient recycling systems captures materials at the end of their life for reuse or energy recovery. This closed-loop system minimizes waste and conserves resources, aligning with the principles of sustainability and ensuring that Chinese furniture artistry thrives in an environmentally conscious world.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study explores the challenges facing the heritage of Chinese furniture artistry and proposes strategies for its sustainable revitalization. By integrating modern technology with traditional craftsmanship, reinterpreting cultural symbols through contemporary design, and expanding user-oriented approaches, the research offers a comprehensive framework to address issues of craftsmanship loss, cultural distortion, and ecological imbalance. These strategies not only preserve cultural continuity but also adapt to modern market demands, ensuring the long-term relevance and sustainability of Chinese furniture artistry in a globalized and ecologically conscious world. The findings highlight the importance of balancing tradition with innovation, providing practical guidance for the industry's future development.

Funding

Software Engineering Institute of Guangzhou 2024 Campus level Research Project (KY202431); 2024 Software Engineering Institute of Guangzhou Off campus Practice Base Project (SJJXJD202417)

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Reference

- [1] Xue, G., Chen, J., & Lin, Z. (2024). Cultural Sustainable Development Strategies of Chinese Traditional Furniture: Taking Ming-Style Furniture for Example. *Sustainability*, 16(17), 7443.
- [2] Appiah-Kubi, O. P., Jiufang, L., & Zhihui, W. (2021). Historical overview of the Chinese traditional furniture. *Asian Journal of Science and Technology*, 12(05), 11704-11708.
- [3] Ye, J., Zhang, J., Gao, L., Zhou, Y., Liu, Z., & Han, J. (2022). Neo-Chinese style furniture design based on semantic analysis and connection. *KSII Transactions on Internet and Information Systems (TIIS)*, 16(8), 2704-2719.
- [4] Xue, G., Chen, J., & Lin, Z. (2024). Cultural Sustainable Development Strategies of Chinese Traditional Furniture:

- Taking Ming-Style Furniture for Example. *Sustainability*, 16(17), 7443. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16177443>
- [5] Sun, Y. (2020). Applications of Traditional Mortise-Tenon Joint Structure in Contemporary Furniture (Doctoral dissertation, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University).
- [6] Walker, P. A. (2005). Political ecology: where is the ecology?. *Progress in human geography*, 29(1), 73-82.
- [7] Wu, D. (2019, April). Research on the application of Chinese traditional cultural elements in modern furniture design. In 3rd International Conference on Culture, Education and Economic Development of Modern Society (ICCESE 2019) (pp. 300-303). Atlantis Press.
- [8] Zhang, S., Zhu, J., Wang, G., Reng, S., & Yan, H. (2022). Furniture Online Consumer Experience: A Literature Review. *BioResources*, 17(1).

Research on the Collaborative Mechanism of Innovative Materials and Technological Applications in Sustainable Furniture

ZANG Wangshuang¹, XIAO Congrong^{2*}, WU Fan¹

1. Software Engineering Institute of Guangzhou, Guangzhou, 510000, China

2. Department of Xcultural Studies, Graduate School of Kookmin University, Kookmin University, Seoul, 02707, Republic of Korea.

**Corresponding author: XIAO Congrong*

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: In the era of climate change and resource scarcity, sustainable furniture design faces critical challenges, including reliance on non-renewable materials, inefficient production processes, and fragmented innovation ecosystems. This study explores the synergistic potential of innovative materials and advanced technologies to address these challenges. By establishing a collaborative framework that integrates material science breakthroughs such as bio-based composites and recycled polymers with cuttingedge technologies like AI-driven design optimization and additive manufacturing, this research proposes a holistic strategy for sustainable furniture development. The study emphasizes cross-disciplinary collaboration, policy-industry-academia partnerships, and usercentric design to enhance environmental performance, economic viability, and cultural relevance. Sustainable development, ensuring its long-term survival and relevance in modern society.

Keywords: Sustainable Furniture; Innovative Materials; Additive Manufacturing; Cross-disciplinary Collaboration

Published: May 7, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.295>

1. Introduction

Furniture, as a cornerstone of the human living environment, reflects societal values, technological advancements, and ecological awareness. Traditional furniture manufacturing heavily relies on virgin timber and energy-intensive processes, leading to deforestation and carbon emissions. Wood, one of the most historically prevalent materials in global furniture production, is prized for its natural aesthetics, workability, and high durability^[1]. However, the finite availability of timber resources, coupled with declining biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services, has heightened global concerns regarding sustainability. Consequently, the furniture industry urgently needs to transition toward circular design principles and resource-efficient practices. By fostering structured collaboration to integrate novel materials and technologies, scalable and sustainable furniture systems can be unlocked^[2]. Specifically, the following approaches can be pursued:

1.1 Material Innovation and Integration

Develop and apply novel materials with high recyclability and biocompatibility, such as bio-based plastics, bamboo fiber composites, and reclaimed timber^[3]. Through interdisciplinary research, integrate materials science with design and engineering to ensure the feasibility and economic viability of these materials in practical production.

1.2 Technology Integration and Standardization

Promote the adoption of Industry 4.0 technologies, including 3D printing, the Internet of Things (IoT), and smart manufacturing ^[4]. By establishing unified technical standards and data-sharing platforms, enhance the overall efficiency and synergy of technological applications.

1.3 Interdisciplinary Collaboration Mechanisms

Establish robust collaboration frameworks among materials scientists, designers, and engineers to foster cross-disciplinary research and innovation. Through joint projects, academic exchanges, and industry-academia partnerships, advance holistic solutions for sustainable furniture systems.

Through material innovation, technological integration, and interdisciplinary collaboration, the furniture industry can facilitate a seamless transition from conventional production paradigms to sustainable development models. Such a transformation not only mitigates environmental burdens but also enhances the industry's competitiveness and long-term sustainability ^[5].

2. Current Dilemmas in Sustainable Furniture Development

2.1 Material Constraints and Environmental Impact

Traditional furniture production faces significant material limitations and environmental impacts in material selection and use. On the one hand, over-deforestation of traditional materials such as tropical hardwood leads to the depletion of forest resources and the loss of biodiversity, while the use of petroleum-based polymers increases dependence on non-renewable resources and environmental pollution ^[6]. On the other hand, the volatile organic compounds (VOCs) released by synthetic adhesives and topcoats not only negatively affect indoor air quality, but also poses a potential threat to the health of residents. In addition, the non-degradability of traditional furniture materials leads to a large amount of waste accumulated in landfills, further aggravating resource waste and environmental pollution. The limitations of these materials and processes highlight the urgency of the transition to sustainable materials and technologies to achieve sustainable development in the furniture industry.

2.2 Technological Adoption Barriers

Although sustainable technology provides new opportunities for the furniture industry, it still faces many obstacles in practical applications. These barriers mainly include high technical costs, technical compatibility issues, insufficient knowledge and skills, low market acceptance and insufficient policy support. High technology costs limit the willingness of SMEs to adopt, and technology compatibility issues make it difficult for new technologies to seamlessly connect with existing equipment. In addition, the lack of relevant knowledge and skills in the industry further hinders the promotion of technology. Consumers have low awareness and willingness to buy sustainable furniture, insufficient market acceptance, and the government has limited policy support and supervision. These factors together limit the widespread application of sustainable technology in the furniture industry, highlighting the urgency of promoting technology integration and policy support.

2.3 Disconnected Innovation Ecosystems

The sustainable development of the furniture industry also faces the problem of a disconnected innovation ecosystem. Isolated working patterns among materials scientists, designers, engineers, and policy makers hinder interdisciplinary collaboration and overall solutions. This disconnection is not only reflected in poor communication between different professional fields, but also in the imperfection of the cooperation mechanism between industry, academia and research. For example, new materials and technologies developed by scientific research institutions are often difficult to quickly convert into actual products, and the needs of enterprises cannot be promptly fed back to the scientific research link. In addition, the lack of a unified sustainable development standard and certification system has made sustainable furniture products on the market uneven, making it difficult for consumers to identify truly environmentally friendly products. This disconnected innovation ecosystem limits the speed of the furniture industry's progress on the road of sustainable development. It is urgent to establish a more coordinated and efficient innovation ecosystem to promote close cooperation among various stakeholders and promote the comprehensive development of sustainable furniture.

3.Theoretical Framework Construction

3.1 Circular Material Systems

In order to cope with the material limitations and environmental impacts in traditional furniture production, building a recycled material system has become a key strategy for achieving sustainable development of the furniture industry. The recycling material system aims to achieve a closed-loop cycle of resources through material recycling, reuse and regeneration. The principle of circular economy advocates closed-loop logistics, emphasizing recyclability, biodegradability and modular design. Materials such as bamboo fiber reinforced bioplastics and upgraded and recycled agricultural waste are in line with these principles and reduce dependence on limited resources.

3.2 Technology Convergence Theory

The theory of technology integration provides important theoretical support for the sustainable development of the furniture industry, emphasizing the breaking of the current situation of technology fragmentation through the integration and coordination of cross-field technologies and improving production efficiency, resource utilization efficiency and environmental benefits. In practice, enterprises should establish cross-departmental innovation teams to promote cooperation and exchanges between experts in different technical fields; industry associations should promote technology sharing and cooperation within the industry and establish a technology exchange platform; governments should introduce relevant policies to encourage enterprises to integrate technology and innovate. Through the integrated application of intelligent manufacturing technology, green manufacturing technology and new environmentally friendly materials, it can not only improve production efficiency and product quality, but also significantly reduce environmental impact and promote green transformation and sustainable development of the furniture industry.

3.3 Collaborative Innovation Model

Based on stakeholder theory, the collaborative innovation model emphasizes the key role of multi-actor partnerships such as government, universities, businesses and NGOs in jointly developing sustainable solutions. This model breaks the disconnection in the traditional innovation ecosystem by integrating professional knowledge and resources in different fields and forms an efficient and collaborative innovation network. For example, the EU-funded Furniture 360 project demonstrates how policy incentives can accelerate the synergy of material technology and promote the development of sustainable furniture. Through interdisciplinary cooperation, integration of industry, academia and research, and policy support, the collaborative innovation model can not only accelerate the research and development and application of new technologies and new materials, but also improve resource utilization efficiency and reduce environmental impacts, provide a solid foundation for the sustainable development of the furniture industry, and help achieve the goal of low-carbon economy and environmental protection ^[7].

4.Collaborative Strategies for Sustainable Innovation

4.1 Material-Technology Co-Development

Carbon negative furniture is manufactured using algae polymers and 3D printed mycelial structures. Algae polymers are highly renewable, can absorb carbon dioxide, and make high-strength and unique texture furniture materials. 3D printed mycelium structure can customize complex components, have good biodegradability, further reduce carbon emissions, and open up new paths for sustainable furniture.

Deploy IoT sensors on production lines to monitor energy use and material efficiency in real time. The sensor can accurately monitor equipment energy consumption, material consumption and other parameters. Combined with data analysis, enterprises can optimize production processes, reduce energy consumption and material waste, improve production efficiency, and achieve green production.

4.2 Cross-Disciplinary Platforms

Establish an innovation center, materials scientists work with designers to produce prototypes of recyclable modular furniture. This cooperation model not only accelerates the research and development and application of sustainable materials, but also improves the service life and recycling efficiency of furniture through modular design. The establishment of the Innovation

Center provides a practical platform for interdisciplinary research, promotes cooperation between the academic and industry, and promotes the commercialization of sustainable furniture.

Implement digital platforms to realize open source sharing of material databases and manufacturing protocols. Through digital platforms, businesses, designers and researchers can share the latest material performance data and manufacturing technologies, facilitating the rapid dissemination and innovation of knowledge. The open source sharing mechanism reduces R&D costs, increases the overall innovation speed of the industry, and provides technical support and cooperation opportunities for the sustainable development of the furniture industry.

4.3 Policy-Driven Incentives

By providing tax rebates to companies using certified sustainable materials, the government can not only directly reduce the economic burden on enterprises, but also incentivize more enterprises to give priority to environmentally friendly materials, and promote the entire industry to develop in a sustainable direction^[8]. This policy support helps to improve the market competitiveness of sustainable materials, promote efficient use of resources and environmental protection.

Government subsidies for the research and development of low-impact technologies can accelerate the innovation and application of these environmentally friendly technologies. For example, the development of water-based adhesives can reduce the emission of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and improve indoor air quality; the use of solar kilns can reduce energy consumption and reduce carbon emissions. These subsidy measures not only help enterprises reduce R&D costs, but also promote technological progress in the industry and achieve a win-win situation between the economy and the environment.

5.Results and Discussion

5.1 Case Study: Ronghuan Furniture Design

In Figure 5-1, a coconut shell material combined with epoxy resin was used to develop an environmentally friendly and durable furniture product. As an agricultural waste, coconut shell has good mechanical properties and environmental friendliness. By mixing coconut shell fragments with epoxy resin, a high-strength, durable composite material with natural beauty is created. The modular design makes the furniture easy to assemble and disassemble and improves the recyclability of the product. The project successfully reduced material costs by 35%, reduced carbon emissions by 60%, reduced production waste by 25%, and reduced costs by 18%. This achievement not only demonstrates the feasibility of coconut shell and epoxy resin composites in furniture manufacturing, but also provides new ideas and practical experience for the sustainable development of the furniture industry.

Figure 5-1 Ronghuan sustainable furniture design



5.2 Impact of AI-Enhanced Design Tools

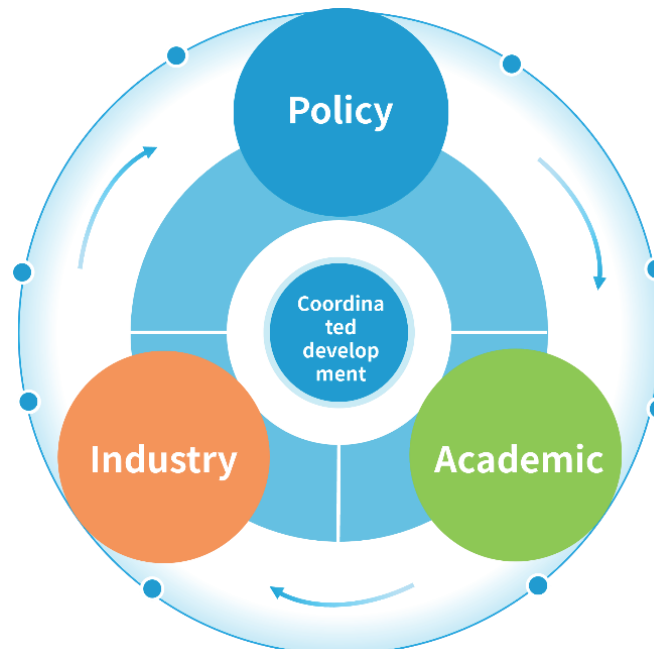
The application of generative artificial intelligence algorithms in furniture design significantly optimizes product design and reduces material use. For example, a Swedish manufacturer optimized desktop designs by using this algorithm to maintain structural integrity while reducing material usage by 30%. This not only reduces production costs, but also reduces waste in

the production process, reducing production waste by 22% and cost by 15%. This case demonstrates the huge potential of artificial intelligence-enhanced design tools in improving resource utilization efficiency and reducing costs, providing new technical paths and practical examples for the sustainable development of the furniture industry.

5.3 Policy-Academia-Industry Triad

Against the backdrop of increasingly severe global environmental pollution, governments have introduced policies to promote sustainable development. For example, the policies such as the “Action Plan for Energy Conservation and Carbon Reduction in 2024-2025” issued by China provide a clear direction of transformation for the furniture industry, and encourage enterprises to adopt environmentally friendly materials and technologies to reduce carbon emissions. These policies not only provide directions for academic research and industrial innovation, but also promote the development of sustainable furniture through specific incentives and regulatory frameworks. At the same time, close cooperation between academics and industries has accelerated the commercial application of sustainable technologies. For example, the PET furniture project funded by the Ministry of Environment of South Korea, through cooperation between universities and small and medium-sized enterprises, transfers 1,200 tons of plastic waste every year, reducing environmental pollution and meeting consumers’ demand for environmentally friendly products. Coordinated cooperation between policies, academics and industries is an important model to promote the development of sustainable furniture. In the future, this collaborative cooperation should be further strengthened to meet global environmental challenges, as shown in Figure 5-1.

Figure 5-2 Trinity Collaborative Development Mechanism



6. Conclusion

This study shows that the synergistic integration of innovative materials and advanced technologies is the key to promoting the development of sustainable furniture. By promoting interdisciplinary partnerships, leveraging policy incentives, and prioritizing circular design, the furniture industry is able not only meet changing consumer needs, but also significantly mitigate its impact on the environment. Future research should further explore the scalability challenges and cultural adaptability of these strategies in different global contexts to ensure that the development of sustainable furniture can be widely used and promoted globally.

Funding

Software Engineering Institute of Guangzhou 2024 Campus level Research Project (KY202431); 2024 Software Engineering Institute of Guangzhou Off campus Practice Base Project (SJJXJD202417)

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Reference

- [1] Muhammad Suandi, M. E., Amlus, M. H., Hemdi, A. R., Abd Rahim, S. Z., Ghazali, M. F., & Rahim, N. L. (2022). A review on sustainability characteristics development for wooden furniture design. *Sustainability*, 14(14), 8748.
- [2] Wang, Y., Liu, C., Zhang, X., & Zeng, S. (2023). Research on sustainable furniture design based on waste textiles recycling. *Sustainability*, 15(4), 3601.
- [3] Kamau-Devers, K., & Miller, S. A. (2020). The environmental attributes of wood fiber composites with bio-based or petroleum-based plastics. *The International Journal of Life Cycle Assessment*, 25, 1145-1159.
- [4] Ashima, R., Haleem, A., Bahl, S., Javaid, M., Mahla, S. K., & Singh, S. (2021). Automation and manufacturing of smart materials in Additive Manufacturing technologies using Internet of Things towards the adoption of Industry 4.0. *Materials Today: Proceedings*, 45, 5081-5088.
- [5] da Silva Cavalcante, R. L. (2024). integrating sustainability in furniture design: a holistic analysis of materials, manufacturing processes, and circular economy. *revista de gestão social e ambiental*, 18(4), 1-13.
- [6] ong, X., Ma, Q., Wu, Z., & Zhang, M. (2020). Current situation and key manufacturing considerations of green furniture in China: A review. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 267, 121957.
- [7] Reficco, E., Gutiérrez, R., Jaén, M. H., & Auletta, N. (2018). Collaboration mechanisms for sustainable innovation. *Journal of cleaner production*, 203, 1170-1186.
- [8] Cloutier, C., Oktaei, P., & Lehoux, N. (2020). Collaborative mechanisms for sustainability-oriented supply chain initiatives: State of the art, role assessment and research opportunities. *International Journal of Production Research*, 58(19), 5836-5850.

The Intangible Cultural Heritage Revitalization and Rural Revitalization Practice of Market Folk Art – A Field Study Based on the Huji Book Fair

Huang Li*

School of Media and Film, Huanggang Normal University, Huanggang, Hubei, 438000, China

*Corresponding author: HuangLi_540999633@qq.com

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: The Huji Book Fair, as a typical representative of the combination of rural markets and folk art performances in North China, originated in the Ming Dynasty, flourished during the Qing Dynasty, and was included in the national intangible cultural heritage list in 2006. Based on local chronicles, interviews with artists, and field studies, this paper delves into the creation environment and organizational structure of the Huji Book Fair, exploring its cultural implications in terms of folk beliefs, moral education, and community cohesion. The study finds that, in the process of contemporary social development, the Huji Book Fair faces challenges such as generational discontinuity and the disappearance of rituals, with a sharp decline in full-time storytellers and fundamental changes in traditional forms and content. To address these issues, local efforts have included initiatives like “Book Fair into Schools” for cultural reproduction and the integration of culture and tourism to promote industrial exploration. The study suggests that the inheritance of the Huji Book Fair needs to seek a dynamic balance between tradition and innovation, government and grassroots, and tradition and technology, fully leveraging its cultural empowerment role in rural revitalization, achieving its living heritage and the reconstruction of rural cultural ecology in contemporary society.

Keywords: Huji Book Fair; Market Folk Art; Historical Inheritance; Intangible Cultural Heritage Revitalization

Published: May 19, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.338>

The Huji Book Fair is a typical representative of the combination of rural markets and folk art performances in North China. Its origins can be traced back to the Ming Dynasty, and it flourished during the Qing Dynasty. As noted by G. William Skinner (1998), rural markets in North China are not only places for the exchange of goods but also serve as a social and cultural space for “grassroots market communities”^[1]. The Huji Book Fair is built around the large Spring Festival market held on the twelfth day of the first lunar month, and follows a unique pattern of “showing books—writing books—performing in villages.” It was included in the national intangible cultural heritage list in 2006. This paper, based on the local chronicles of Huimin County, interviews with artists, and field studies, explores the organizational structure, artistic characteristics, and cultural value of the Huji Book Fair, providing a case reference for the living inheritance of traditional folk art.

1. Creation Environment: The Symbiotic Mechanism of Folk Art in Rural Society

Huji Town has a long history and is an important commercial hub, stretching south across the Yellow River and north to southern Hebei. It also has a rich tradition of storytelling culture, with folk art fairs forming based on market trade, reaching a

certain scale.

1.1 Geographical and Commercial Foundation

According to the Revised Huimin County Chronicle from the Republic of China, Huji is “the financial center of several counties in the southeast,” with its livestock market and timber market being “the largest in the county.”^[2] The Spring Festival market on the 12th day of the first lunar month attracts people from dozens of surrounding counties, providing a strong flow of visitors for the book fair.

Huji Town, the location of the Huji Book Fair, is situated in the southeastern part of Huimin County, Binzhou City, Shandong Province. “The government office of Huji Town is also called Huji, or Huji Village^[3]. Huji Town is located on the northern alluvial plain of Shandong, with the Yellow River to the south, and has long been a commercial hub.”

The Continuously Revised Huimin County Annals from the Republic of China era records that Huji “holds the financial center of several counties in the southeast,” and its livestock market and timber market are “the largest in the county.” The large Spring Festival market on the twelfth day of the first lunar month attracts people from surrounding counties, providing a foundation for the flow of people to the book fair.

1.2 Accumulation of Folk Art Tradition

The northern Shandong region has a well-known saying: “If you marry into Huji, it’s not for the house or land, but for the chance to watch the plays in Huji.” Since the Qing Dynasty, genres such as Xihe Drum and Wooden Board Drum have been popular, and by the Republic of China period, there were already over a hundred artists gathering at the Huimin Chenghuang Temple Fair.^[4] The Huji Book Fair has continued this tradition, forming an interactive model of “performers setting up stalls to showcase books—villages hiring performers for shows.”

In this region, a popular storytelling form called pingci does not require the use of drums or string instruments. It is a type of narrative storytelling based on novels, with content drawn from works such as *Chronicles of the Eastern Zhou Kingdoms*, *Journey to the West*, *Tales of Mounted Bandits*, *The Decline of the Tang Dynasty*, *The Seven Heroes and Five Gallants*, *The Tale of Yue Fei*, *The Case of Judge Peng*, *The Case of Judge Shi*, and *The Case of Judge Bao*. In addition to this, there are also forms such as guqiang (drum tunes), meihua diao (plum blossom tune), siyewa (four-tile clappers), and luoziqiang (falling-note tune). Their storytelling content typically involves plots like a young man traveling to the capital to seek relatives, an official going on an undercover inspection, or dramatic tales such as *The Eight Immortals Cause a Stir in the East* and *Li Cuilian Hangs Herself*.^[5]

Among these, pingci refers to what is now known as pingshu (traditional oral storytelling), meihua diao is the predecessor of Xihe Drum, and siyewa is essentially bamboo clapper storytelling. These traditional forms remain the main performance genres at the Huji Book Fair today. Likewise, stories once told by past artists—*The Case of Judge Peng*, *The Case of Judge Shi*, *The Case of Judge Bao*, and *Tales of Mounted Bandits*—continue to be core repertoire for folk performers in rural areas. The people of Huimin have always enjoyed listening to stories and watching plays, especially during the Lantern Festival on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month, which is the time for the richest entertainment activities. In the Republic of China era, “all the mountain fairs and temple fairs used performances to attract traders and townspeople, either for ceremonial plays, such as for thanking the gods for curing illnesses or fulfilling vows, or for celebratory plays, such as for the river’s safety, the New Year festivals in cities, the birth of a child, or celebrating longevity.”^[6]

2. Organizational Structure: The Triple Performance Model within the Marketplace Space-Time

The Huji Book Fair is held annually during the first lunar month, divided into three stages: the “Pre-Festival,” the “Main Festival,” and the “Post-Festival.”^[7] Among them, the Main Festival is the most lively, with the highest level of audience participation.

2.1 Pre-Festival: A Ritualized Space Constructed by the Performer Community

The period from New Year’s Day to the twelfth day of the lunar month is collectively known as the “Pre-Festival.” On the eleventh day, performers from various regions arrive punctually in Huji Village and lodge in local inns or in the homes of acquaintances.

That evening, they gather to engage in the following activities: “New Year’s gatherings and greetings, sharing friendships, paying homage to the ancestral master, performing the ‘Gazing Skyward’ ritual for deceased elders; exchanging skills, previewing performances; introducing new apprentices and acknowledging lineages; strictly observing professional ethics, punishing violations; living harmoniously with kin, respecting elders and resolving disputes.”^[8] Over years of repeated gatherings, these activities and codes have evolved into customary traditions.

2.1.1 New Year Greetings and Introducing New Apprentices

During the Book Fair, performers who have taken in new apprentices often bring them along to introduce to their elders. In some cases, the apprenticeship ceremonies are even held directly at Huji. Within the same lineage, senior members identify one another according to generational naming conventions, symbolizing the apprentice’s official entry into the performing arts profession. This system helps facilitate future mutual support among fellow performers and members of the same lineage.

2.1.2 The “Gazing Skyward” and “Sitting Court” Rituals

The “Gazing Skyward” ritual was once an essential event for performers on the evening of the eleventh day, held after paying tribute to the ancestral master—King Zhuang of Zhou.^[9] Performers are expected to strictly adhere to established norms within the profession. Any breach of conduct is met with corrective actions. These disciplinary proceedings are referred to in the storytelling community as “Sitting Court.” The Book Fair, when performers are all present, is a key opportunity for such disciplinary matters to be addressed.

2.1.3 Exchanging Repertoires and Previewing Performances

The Pre-Festival stage allows performers to exchange storytelling repertoires and refine their craft. New apprentices can learn from senior performers, and it also serves as an opportunity for performers to demonstrate their abilities to audiences, warming up for the upcoming Main Festival performances.

2.1.4 Mutual Support and Conflict Resolution

Performers in the folk arts tradition are known for supporting one another, especially in times of personal events such as weddings and funerals, or when facing hardships. When a senior performer passes away, apprentices will go door to door on the evening of the eleventh to inform others and bow to the elders—a custom known as “Knocking on Doors.” Disputes among performers are also resolved during the fair in Huji, mediated by senior figures in the community.

2.2 Main Festival: A Carnival Space of Market Negotiation and Cultural Performance

The period from the 12th to the 16th day of the lunar month constitutes the “Main Festival,” marking the climax of the Huji Book Fair. During this time, performers set up their spaces, showcase their storytelling skills, negotiate fees, and sell their performances, while crowds flock in to listen to stories and attend the bustling market. Key components of the Main Festival include setting up performance spaces, showcasing acts, negotiating engagements (referred to as “writing the book”), mutual assistance and competition among performers, and finally leaving the fair to begin village performances. Before each performance, artists typically give an opening speech to attract and engage the audience.

When performers showcase their acts, representatives from nearby villages assess and select storytellers for hire—a process known as “writing the book.” Once a deal is reached, three customary practices help ensure the agreement is honored: The hiring party pays a deposit to the performer. A written note is made, listing the name of the person hiring, the amount of the deposit, the agreed fee, the number of storytelling sessions, and the name and address of the village. This note is kept by the performer. The hiring party takes a piece of the performer’s equipment—such as a storytelling drum or instrument—as collateral.

On the afternoon of the 12th, hired performers travel to their respective villages, where performances begin that evening and continue until the 16th—four days and five nights, totaling thirteen sessions. The host village provides food and lodging, and the engagement ends after the final performance on the night of the 16th. Aside from the Lantern Festival on the 15th, when villages often hire storytellers, local people also engage performers for important celebratory events. At the family level, these include weddings, childbirth, academic or job promotions, and birthday celebrations for elders. At the business level, storytelling is hired to celebrate new business openings. Today, with modern communication methods, fewer performers rely on the marketplace to secure engagements.

2.3 Post-Festival: A Flexible Mechanism for Cultural Continuation

The period from the 17th to the 21st day of the lunar month is known as the “Post-Festival.” If a village is satisfied with a performer’s show during the Main Festival, they may renegotiate to extend the engagement. Well-known performers who are not re-hired often return to the Huji marketplace to continue selling their performances. Villages, families, or businesses still in need of storytelling acts can come to hire them. The length of performances during this stage varies, and the fees are typically lower than during the Main Festival.

3. Cultural Significance: A Mirror of Rural Society

3.1 A Living Carrier of Folk Belief

The Huji Book Fair, deeply integrated with the Lantern Festival celebrations, forms a cultural space akin to what G. William Skinner described as a “grassroots market community.” In his analysis of rural market towns in North China, Skinner noted: “The standard market town is not only the node of economic exchange but also the locus of social relations and cultural rituals, forming a cohesive social network within its area of influence.”^[10]

Relying on the Spring Festival market held on the 12th day of the first lunar month, the Huji Book Fair embeds traditional storytelling (quyi performances) into the seasonal festival cycle, establishing a complete ritual chain of “showcasing stories – hiring performers – repaying vows.” For instance, the custom of hiring storytellers to fulfill vows (huanyuan) reflects the active religious practices of the local populace: when a family recovers from illness or welcomes a new child after making a vow to deities or ancestors, they hire performers to “repay the vow through storytelling.” Through narrative acts such as *The Eight Immortals Celebrate a Birthday* or *Guanyin Bestows a Child*, secular entertainment is interwoven with sacred belief. This cyclical pattern of “making a vow – repaying a vow” exemplifies Clifford Geertz’s assertion that: “Cultural patterns—religious, philosophical, aesthetic—are ‘programs’ which provide a template for the organization of social and psychological processes.”^[11]

Moreover, although the “Gazing to the Sky” (wangkong) ritual has now largely faded, its historical practice powerfully expressed the sacredness of the storytelling profession. According to the *Revised Gazetteer of Huimin County* from the Republican era, on the night of the 11th day of the first lunar month, performers would “change into ritual attire, paint their faces, set up an altar facing southwest, burn offerings and worship ancestors, and perform Nuo dances to expel evil.”^[12] This embodied performance merged the veneration of Zhou Zhuangwang (regarded as the founding deity of quyi arts) with the commemoration of departed souls, constructing a triple-layered belief system connecting “humans – gods – ancestors.” Such rituals were not merely artistic acts, but reflections of the “rites of passage”^[13] within rural society. Through liminal experiences—like performing Nuo dances—everyday order was temporarily suspended, allowing the reconstruction of performers’ professional identity and cultural authority.

3.2 Rural Narratives of Moral Instruction

The storytelling repertoires at the Book Fair, such as *The Case of Judge Bao* and *The Generals of the Yang Family*, subtly convey Confucian ethics through narrative templates emphasizing “honest officials delivering justice” and themes of “loyalty, filial piety, integrity, and righteousness.”

For example, in *Judge Bao: The Execution of Chen Shimei* the performer uses formulaic lyrics like “The iron-faced judge discerns the loyal from the treacherous, with Wang Chao, Ma Han standing on either side,” to portray Bao Zheng as the embodiment of justice. The dramatic climax—Bao executing his own son-in-law—satisfies the public’s yearning for judicial fairness while simultaneously resonating with Michel Foucault’s theory of “discursive practices”: power constructs moral standards through narrative, leading audiences to unconsciously accept norms such as “loyalty over love” and “law above authority.”^[14] This narrative structure exemplifies what Pierre Bourdieu called “symbolic violence”: “Symbolic violence is the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity.”

The performers’ strategies further reinforced the moral and didactic function of the storytelling. For example, Xihe Dagushu performer Li Hongbin jokingly opened his performance with: “We’ll pick up where we left off—getting more exciting as we go. Don’t be fooled by me being over fifty; I’ve still got plenty of energy!”^[15] This kind of front stage performance—a term borrowed from Erving Goffman’s dramaturgical theory—wraps serious ethical themes in a form of entertainment through

humorous banter and interactive teasing, thereby reducing the preachy tone and increasing audience receptivity.^[16] Meanwhile, the stylized gestures of shou-yan-shen-fa-bu (hand, eyes, body, method, steps)—such as stroking the beard to show loyalty or flinging sleeves to denounce treachery—serve as repeated bodily symbols that encode Confucian ethics into “visualized moral instruction,” allowing largely illiterate rural audiences to intuitively grasp the boundaries between good and evil.

3.3 Cultural Bonds of Community Cohesion

During the Book Fair, most storytelling performances are commissioned collectively by villages. According to the Republic of China-era Gazetteer of Huimin County, “During the Lantern Festival Book Fair, about one-third of the county’s villages would invite performers to tell stories.^[17] Some villages hired storytellers every year without fail.”

The enthusiasm for storytelling stemmed not only from economic means but also as a symbol of cultural prestige. Hiring performers could even strengthen village cohesion. Practices like door-knocking (mourning rituals among performers), mutual assistance, and conflict mediation among artists helped maintain the ethical order and professional identity of this “jianghu” performer community.

4. Contemporary Challenges: The Dual Crisis Under Modernity

In the pre-1949 era, tens of thousands of performers and spectators flocked to the Book Fair each year. Crowds were so dense that it was common to lose a shoe while jostling to watch a performance. The late 1980s marked a final peak, with the construction of the Quyi Performance Hall.^[18] However, by the 1990s, the fair began to decline, and this trend became more evident in the 21st century.

4.1 Generational Disconnect and Inheritance Crisis

From a vocational perspective, past performers at the Book Fair were diverse: Over half were farmers who took up storytelling as their main occupation. Others were full-time performing artists or employees of cultural institutions who participated in state events and performed at the Book Fair. Some had storytelling as a side job—engaging in agriculture, manual labor, or retired life, occasionally performing. Younger apprentices balanced school or part-time jobs while learning storytelling, joining their mentors during the fair for hands-on learning. In terms of age distribution, prior to the 1980s, there was a balanced representation across age groups. Since the 1990s, however, the shrinking performance market and the aging audience base have led to a drastic reduction in full-time storytellers.

“Of the 100+ performers who participated in the 2010 and 2011 Book Fairs, fewer than five still rely on storytelling as a main livelihood today.”^[19] Although efforts by the organizing committee have brought young performers to the stage—for instance, in 2023, many young people participated in performances—the economic reality remains that storytelling alone cannot sustain a living. Most performers now treat it as a sideline, only performing when opportunities arise, rather than proactively seeking gigs as in the past.

4.2 Ritual Disappearance and the Crisis of Authenticity

The fading of the “Wangkong” ritual has weakened the identity of the performer community. State-led modes of operation have transformed what was once grounded in the “lifeworld” into a top-down form of cultural communication.

Before the 1990s, the Book Fair retained a full traditional structure: Pre-festival: ancestral worship and book display fostered the performer community. Main festival: villagers autonomously hired performers, generating market-driven cultural interaction. Post-festival: extended performances met ongoing demand. Since 2007, after full government intervention, this structure has undergone a fundamental transformation: Ritual practices in the pre-festival phase have been replaced by official evaluations. The main festival has become a top-down cultural distribution mechanism. The post-festival phase has nearly vanished due to waning grassroots demand. Although the outer form of the Book Fair still exists today, the traditional booking mechanism, performer autonomy, and ritual authenticity have been largely dismantled.

5. Protection Strategies: Balancing Preservation and Innovation

5.1 Cultural Reproduction Through “Book Fair into Schools”

To address the severe aging of storytelling performers and the shortage of new talent, Huji Town launched the “Book Fair into Schools” initiative in 2012. A Quyi Hall was established at Huji Central Primary School, where students were taught

the history and vocal techniques of Xihe Dagushu, with a strong emphasis on hands-on practice. In 2014, the Huji Book Fair introduced a “China · Huji Lantern Festival Book Fair” Newcomer Competition, providing a platform for young quyi talents to showcase their skills. During the 2016 summer vacation, a special summer class was organized, selecting promising students from earlier school activities for intensive training. Their progress was presented in the town’s “Summer Cooling Book Theater” performance showcase. By 2017, with coordination between the Huji town government and the local education bureau, efforts were made to expand the “Book Fair into Schools” program to all primary schools in the area. That year, a “Quyi Child Star Award” was also added to the fourth Book Fair competition. By 2018, many young performers had emerged on the festival stage, and by 2019, the program had successfully covered all primary schools in Huji. Over one hundred students had received training in quyi with stage experience, ensuring a growing pool of young talent.^[20]

5.2 Industrial Integration Through Cultural Tourism

Since 1985, the Huji Book Fair has explored industrial development, beginning with the construction of a Quyi Performance Hall and hosting free performances by renowned artists such as Liu Lanfang. Following its designation as a National Intangible Cultural Heritage item in 2006, the government strengthened its leadership by establishing dedicated administrative bodies and implementing a “government-funded” model.

In 2021, the Book Fair began its digital transformation, creating a dual model of “offline performances + online dissemination.” Offline, the fair integrates intangible heritage product exhibitions with public-benefit performances. Online, it expands its audience through cross-platform live streaming. Today, the Huji Book Fair has evolved from a grassroots folk gathering into a government-coordinated cultural tourism initiative. Through branding and digital empowerment, it has achieved a modern reinterpretation of traditional cultural resources. “The Huji Book Fair also hosts exhibitions and sales of intangible heritage crafts such as clay figurines, dough sculptures, woodblock New Year prints, and paper cutting, promoting a cultural tourism development model.”^[1] By integrating quyi with e-commerce, the fair helps boost online sales of traditional crafts like woodblock prints, transforming cultural value into economic returns. This innovative practice aligns with the goals of rural revitalization by promoting “thriving industries.”

Conclusion

The Huji Book Fair exemplifies the potential of intangible cultural heritage to empower rural revitalization. As a living tradition embedded in market culture and social rituals, it offers a valuable lens into the symbiosis of economy, art, and belief in rural China. For its revitalization to succeed, a dynamic balance must be achieved—between tradition and innovation, government support and grassroots vitality, and ritual continuity and technological integration. Only by embracing this multifaceted approach can the Huji Book Fair continue to serve as a vibrant carrier of cultural memory and a cornerstone of local identity in contemporary society.

Funding

Doctoral Fund Project of Huanggang Normal University (2042024083): A Study on the Innovative Development of Folk Book Societies under the Background of Culture-Tourism Integration; Project of the Shaanxi Provincial Department of Education (23JK0014): A Study on the Cross-Cultural Communication of Shaanxi Folk Culture Based on Sino-Korean Folk Culture Research.

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

- [1] Skinner, G. William. (1998). *Markets and social structure in rural China*. Stanford University Press.
- [2] Republic of China. (1934). *Continued revision of the Huimin County gazetteer* (Vol. 1). Regional Records.
- [3] Office of the Huimin County Geographic Names Committee, Shandong Province. (1993). *Huimin County geographic names records*. Reform Publishing House.
- [4] Han, Keshun. (2023, January 31). *China’s living fossil of folk art: The 800-year-old unbroken Huji book fair*. Binzhou Daily

- [5] Republic of China.(1934).The continued gazetteer of Huimin County (Vol. 13). Records of Literature
- [6] Republic of China.(1934).The continued gazetteer of Huimin County (Vol. 13). Records of Literature
- [7] Han, Keshun.(2010).Huji book fair.China Federation of Literary and Art Circles Publishing House.
- [8] Huimin County Bureau of Culture.(2005).Application for the national intangible cultural heritage representative project: Huji book fair
- [9] It is said that in ancient times, King Zhouzhuang sent four eloquent ministers—Mei, Qing, Hu, and Zhao—to beat drums and speak about the rewards and punishments of good and evil, encouraging people to do good in order to educate the people. As a result, later generations of folk artists revered King Zhouzhuang as their patron saint.
- [10] Skinner, G. W.(1964).Marketing and social structure in rural China.Association for Asian Studies.
- [11] Geertz, C.(1973).The interpretation of cultures.Basic Books.
- [12] Republic of China.(1934).Revised Hui Min County gazetteer(Vol.13).Literature Section.
- [13] van Gennep, A.(1960).The rites of passage.University of Chicago Press.(Original work published 1909).
- [14] Foucault,M.(1972).The archaeology of knowledge.Pantheon Books.
- [15] Zhang, Y.(2009).Folk artists, book fair heritage, and rural society[Master's thesis, Shandong University].
- [16] Goffman, E.(1959).The presentation of self in everyday life. Anchor Books.
- [17] Republic of China.(1934).Continued revision of Zhongmin County annals(Vol. 3). Literature Section.
- [18] Han, K.(2010).Huji book fair.China Federation of Literary and Art Circles Publishing House.
- [19] Wang, J. (2013, March 8). Those days of ‘heaven as the curtain, earth as the stage’—A look at the lives of contemporary folk storytellers through the Hujia book fair. China Culture Daily.
- [20] Wu, Y.,&Zhang, Y.(2019).Investigation and research on the Hujia book fair's integration into schools. Humanities World,(13).
- [21] Yang, W.,&Shao, K.(2023, February 4).The over 800-year-old Hujia book fair revives with new vitality.Xinhua News Agency.

Artificial Intelligence in International Immigration Management: A Comparative Legal Analysis of the United States, Canada, and the European Union

Yi Peng*, Yong Tang

Center for Research in Police Law of China People's Police University, Langfang, 065000, China

**Corresponding author: Yi Peng*

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: Artificial intelligence (AI) is a strategic technology that leads the future, and major developed countries worldwide regard its development as a significant strategy to enhance national competitiveness and maintain national security. Currently, the United States, Canada, and the European Union are actively exploring the application of AI in the field of immigration, gaining valuable experience. However, they also face risks and hidden dangers such as data security and technological dependency. This article conducts a comparative analysis of the practical cases and legal frameworks of AI application in international immigration management among the United States, Canada, and the EU. It delves into how these jurisdictions balance technological innovation with the protection of citizens' rights through their legal and regulatory mechanisms. The research focuses on specific instances of AI adoption in immigration services, analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of their legal frameworks, and assessing their impact on the efficiency and security of immigration management.

Keywords: Immigration Management; Artificial Intelligence; Comparative Law

Published: May 25, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.413>

1.Introduction

Amid global digital transformation, AI has been deeply integrated into immigration services, significantly impacting immigration management globally ^[1]. When it comes to specific AI - related practices in the United States, Canada, and the EU. The US DHS actively incorporates AI into its sub - agencies, with USCIS emphasizing AI in immigration application processing. Canada focuses on automated decision - support for immigration applications to boost efficiency and accuracy. The EU uses AI to strengthen border security and tackle cross - border threats. Regarding legal frameworks, the US lacks a specific statute for AI in immigration but has relevant regulations and executive orders. Canada has the Directive on Automated Decision - Making, and the EU has a series of regulations, with the Artificial Intelligence Act being highly influential. Comparing the legal frameworks of the three countries, the US adopts a context - specific approach, Canada uses a relatively lenient horizontal framework, and the EU's is a global benchmark. After comparing the practice of using AI and legal framework, it is obvious that each countries' regulation should fit national conditions, adhere to a people - oriented principle, and strengthen international cooperation to build a sound global AI ecosystem for sustainable development in immigration services.

2.The Application of Artificial Intelligence in Immigration: Examining Implementation and Oversight in the U.S., Canada, and Europe

2.1 United States

When it comes to leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) in the federal government realm, there is scarcely any other department that is vying to adopt AI with as much alacrity as the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) who has been actively and aggressively integrating artificial intelligence into its various sub-agencies, with a notable emphasis on the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) which oversees lawful immigration to the United States ^[2]. USCIS has deployed AI technologies to streamline and automate the decision-making process for immigration relief and benefits applications ^[3]. As of 2025, USCIS has prepared and deployed a list of multiple AI pilot cases.

Case ID	Use Case Name	Deployment Status
Pre-deployment		
DHS-17	Case Processing Improvements in FDNS-DS NexGen	Pre-deployment (Initiation)
DHS-372	User Entity and Behavior Analytics (UEBA) for Security Operations (SecOps) Anomaly Identification	Pre-deployment (Acquisition and/or Development)
DHS-414	I-765 - USCIS Face Capture Mobile App	Pre-deployment (Acquisition and/or Development)
DHS-2305	USCIS Translation Service	Pre-deployment (Initiation)
DHS-2384	Verification Match Model	Pre-deployment (Initiation)
DHS-2386	Sentiment Analysis - FOD Field Offices Complaints and Reviews	Pre-deployment (Initiation)
Deployed		
DHS-14	Biometrics Enrollment Tool (BET) Fingerprint Maximization	Deployed (Operation and Maintenance)
DHS-16	ELIS Evidence Classifier Machine Learning (ML) Tagging Solution (formerly Evidence Classifier)	Deployed (Operation and Maintenance)
DHS-55	Person-Centric Identity Services Deduplication Model	Deployed (Operation and Maintenance)
DHS-56	Person-Centric Identity Services A-Number Management Model	Deployed (Operation and Maintenance)
DHS-57	Identity Match Option (IMO) Tool for Record Compilation (formerly Identity Match Option (IMO) Process with DBIS Data Marts)	Deployed (Operation and Maintenance)
DHS-130	Text Analytics Data Science Sentence Similarity Model	Deployed (Operation and Maintenance)
DHS-180	Automated Name and Date of Birth (DOB) Harvesting from Existing Records	Deployed (Operation and Maintenance)
DHS-181	Automated Real time Global Organization Specialist (ARGOS) for Company Registration Submissions to E-Verify	Deployed (Operation and Maintenance)
DHS-189	ELIS Card Photo Validation via myUSCIS	Deployed (Operation and Maintenance)
DHS-366	Large Language Models for an Officer Training Tool	Deployed (Implementation and Assessment)
DHS-413	I-765 - USCIS Facial Recognition through IDENT (1:1 Face Recognition/Validation)	Deployed (Operation and Maintenance)
DHS-2385	Intelligent Document Processing (IDP) for I-539 Form Digitization	Deployed (Implementation and Assessment)
Inactive		
DHS-13	Asylum Text Analytics	Inactive (no longer used)

DHS-20	Time Series Analysis and Forecasting	Inactive (no longer used)
DHS-58	Sentiment Analysis - Employee Satisfaction Surveys	Inactive (no longer used)
DHS-59	Sentiment Analysis–ELIS Case Notes	Inactive (no longer used)
DHS-60	Predicted to Naturalize	Inactive (no longer used)
DHS-61	I-485 Family Matching	Inactive (no longer used)
DHS-63	Topic Modeling on Request For Evidence (RFE) Data Sets	Inactive (no longer used)
DHS-64	I-539 approval prediction	Inactive (no longer used)
DHS-182	Biometrics Enrollment Tool (BET) Fingerprint Quality Score	Inactive (no longer used)
DHS-231	Testing Performance of ML Model using H2O	Inactive (no longer used)

Even though there are no systematic Acts or policies to specifically regulate the use of AI in immigration, the U.S. has already established some standards or limitations to regulate the use of AI for agencies of government ^[4]. These legal regulations would absolutely apply to the field of immigration. As early as September 2020, the U.S. enacted the AI in Government Act of 2020 to promote the adoption of AI in the federal government. Later, on December 2020, President Trump issued Executive Order 13960 which mainly proposes to encourage agencies to use AI and build 9 principles to regulate thereof ^[5].

After a series of layout, AI for Agency Impact Act and Advancing American AI Act was enacted in 2021. This Act clearly confirms that the federal agencies should take steps to promote AI while aligning with U.S. values. Particularly, within 180 days after this Act takes effect, the Secretary of Homeland Security must issue policies and procedures for the Department regarding: (a) The acquisition and use of artificial intelligence; (b) Risk and impact considerations for AI-enabled systems (including machine - learning system data), ensuring full consideration of: The impacts of AI - enabled systems on privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties; Security against misuse, degradation, or inoperability of AI - enabled systems.

Subsequently, DHS issued a memorandum addressing the acquisition and utilization of artificial intelligence, in compliance with the provisions outlined in the Advancing American AI Act. The memo explicit some principles for using AI, including obeying all applicable related law and policies, using data more regulated, ensuring non-discriminatory, establishing risk management, and meeting security requirements. The above principles can be applied in immigration management. Furthermore, the Biden Administration issued Executive Order 14110 in 2023, which emphasized the urgency of governing the use of AI safely and responsibly. After that, the Trump Administration issued Executive Order 14179, and two memorandums, which are M-25-21 and M-25-22. Compared to the Biden Administration, the Trump Administration focuses on innovation, governance, and public trust but does not prioritize risk management ^[6]. In the same year, DHS released Playbook for Public Sector Generative Artificial Intelligence Deployment and guided the subdivision, which is USCIS, to efficiently deploy AI and manage the risks.

2.2 Canada

The deployment of AI in Canada's immigration sector focuses on automated decision support, optimizing visa application allocation, and enhancing data processing efficiency. For example, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has, in recent years, quietly piloted a proprietary AI system to triage immigration applications from China, India, and the Philippines. The agency has since expanded its AI-driven application triage to additional countries, citing the need to modernize, optimize, and accelerate immigration processes ^[7]. The Traveller Modernization program will introduce advanced digital tools and technologies over the next few years to enhance the efficiency of immigration entry and exit processes across Canada, streamlining passenger processing without prioritizing enhanced border security; travelers will be able to verify their identity and complete on-screen customs declarations at major Canadian airports through primary inspection kiosks and eGates, while NEXUS cardholders can access touchless, expedited border services at designated U.S. land crossings through automated self-service options that eliminate physical contact and reduce wait times without compromising existing security measures.

In Canada, the regulatory landscape governing government use of AI varies between federal, provincial, and local jurisdictions. Federally, the Directive on Automated Decision-Making (DADM) serves as the cornerstone of the government's

AI regulation strategy, supported by the Algorithmic Impact Assessment Tool (AIA) to operationalize its principles. As Canada's first national policy addressing algorithmic and automated decision-making in public administration, the DADM applies to any system, tool, or statistical model used to recommend or render administrative decisions affecting individuals. Meanwhile, provincial governments are also advancing regulatory frameworks: Ontario's Digital and Data Strategy outlines governance for AI and algorithms in public decision-making, while Quebec's Law 25—"An Act to Modernize Legislative Provisions Respecting the Protection of Personal Information"—explicitly addresses the use of automated systems in processing personal data. These parallel developments underscore Canada's multifaceted approach to AI oversight.

In Canada's immigration sector, the government has implemented a comprehensive regulatory framework to govern AI deployment in the public sector, particularly through the Directive on Automated Decision-Making (DADM) ^[8]. Developed collaboratively with academic, civil society, and government experts between October 2016 and March 2019, the DADM—Canada's first binding policy on automated decision-making—underwent significant refinement following a workshop with over 100 stakeholders in January 2018 and its official launch on March 4, 2019. The directive was subsequently updated on April 25, 2023, introducing expanded scope, bias testing protocols, data governance standards, gender-based analysis plus (GBA+), and peer review mechanisms. Complementing this framework, the government issued Guidance on the Use of Generative AI on September 6, 2023, outlining responsible use principles, limitations, and best practices for federal agencies, followed by an update on February 20, 2024. Additional guidance released on June 27, 2024 clarified the scope of the DADM to assist departments in determining system compliance, while the Guidance on Peer Review of Automated Decision-Making Systems which was released on January 7, 2025 further supports adherence to the directive's requirements.

2.3 European Union

The EU and its Member States are increasingly relying on artificial intelligence technologies to bolster border security and address cross - border threats like terrorism and serious crime, which is a fresh sign of a broader movement towards making EU borders "smarter." This trend not only focuses on enhancing the existing security measures but also involves the development and integration of large - scale centralized information systems and the implementation of decentralized information exchange mechanisms for border and security management ^[9].

This digital transformation in border management is mainly demonstrated through four key technological aspects. First, there are biometric identification systems that utilize automated fingerprint and facial recognition technologies. Second, affective computing technologies with the ability to recognize emotions are being employed. Third, algorithm - driven predictive risk modeling is used to anticipate potential security risks. Fourth, AI - powered migration analytics infrastructure is in place, enabling real - time monitoring, in - depth pattern analysis, and accurate scenario forecasting. In the Netherlands, the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) is currently making use of algorithms to identify possible fraud in identity documents as well as related certificates, including residence permits, birth, marriage, and death certificates. This use of AI - based algorithms helps the service to enhance the accuracy and efficiency of its fraud detection processes, thereby contributing to the overall security of the Netherlands' border management system.

Germany was the first and remains the only country in Europe to implement a dialect identification assistance system (DIAS) as part of its asylum application process. In 2017, Germany's Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) began piloting a dialect recognition tool in Bamberg before rolling it out nationwide starting September of that year. Similarly, Latvia incorporated automated speech recognition into its citizenship application procedures in July 2021 through an interactive self-assessment system. This tool evaluates applicants' language proficiency and familiarity with the Latvian national anthem, which has become a statutory requirement for naturalization in the country ^[10].

In recent years, the EU has implemented a comprehensive legislative framework governing artificial intelligence and related technologies in migration and security contexts. Key measures include Regulation (EU) 2019/818, which establishes interoperability standards for information systems and data sharing among EU member states in areas including police and judicial cooperation, asylum processing, and migration management. Building on this foundation, the Artificial Intelligence Act (AIA) introduces targeted regulations for AI deployment in critical domains such as immigration procedures, asylum applications, and border security operations. This legislative framework seeks to harmonize technological innovation with

essential safeguards for fundamental rights in sensitive public policy sectors.

As a landmark piece of legislation, the EU Artificial Intelligence Act establishes a global benchmark for AI regulation through its broad applicability across industries. The regulation's tiered approach to compliance - based on system risk levels - enables proportionate oversight that prevents harmful applications while permitting unrestricted use of low-risk systems. High-risk AI systems face stringent but innovation-friendly requirements designed to balance security needs with technological advancement. Notably, Annex III of the Act identifies eight high-risk application areas, including (a) Biometric identification systems: Technologies used for biometric recognition and personal characteristic analysis (including emotion recognition systems); (b) Immigration, asylum, and border control systems: AI deployments in migration management operations conducted by competent public authorities. This risk-based classification system ensures rigorous oversight for sensitive applications while maintaining appropriate flexibility for less critical AI implementations. By establishing clear standards for high-risk applications while fostering innovation in lower-risk areas, the AIA creates a balanced regulatory environment that addresses both security imperatives and fundamental rights protections ^[11].

3. Legal Frameworks for AI in Immigration: Assessing Strengths and Gaps in the U.S., Canada, and Europe

Currently, horizontal and context-specific approaches characterize the global divide concerning AI regulation. The EU The AI Act is a horizontal framework ^[12]. Canada is embracing AI within its Digital Charter by adopting a more lenient horizontal framework as compared to the EU AI Act ^[13]. Conversely, context-specific approaches tailor AI governance to particular use cases and their impacts on individuals within specific operational environments. Countries leading in AI research and development, such as the United States, generally favor a context-specific regulatory approach. This framework views AI-induced societal risks as extensions of existing challenges within domains where AI complements or replaces traditional methods. Rather than creating blanket AI regulations, it advocates for tailored rules that address emerging harms in specific contexts. By aligning legal frameworks with the unique societal impacts of AI in different sectors, this approach prioritizes targeted interventions over generalized policy measures.

3.1 United States

In recent years, the regulatory landscape governing AI applications in U.S. immigration has shifted significantly depending on the policy priorities of successive presidential administrations. Under the Biden administration, the regulatory approach for AI in immigration emphasizes oversight, with a particular focus on AI safety and privacy protection.

For example, U.S. policymakers introduced the AI Leadership Training Act, which aims to improve AI literacy among federal leaders in response to the technology's growing adoption across government agencies. This legislation requires the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to develop and periodically update an AI training program, promoting responsible and ethical AI use within the federal government. Building on earlier laws, the initiative extends AI training requirements to federal employees involved in procuring AI technologies for government use.

Additionally, the National AI Commission Act proposes establishing a National AI Commission tasked with developing a comprehensive regulatory framework for AI. At the same time, President Biden issued an Executive Order on Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy AI, which sets new standards for AI safety, security, and privacy protection for Americans. The order also prioritizes advancing equity and civil rights, fostering competition and innovation, and ensuring responsible AI deployment. It mandates the creation of a national security memorandum to guide the ethical application of AI in military and intelligence operations, safeguarding Americans' privacy while promoting an open, competitive AI market that emphasizes U.S. innovation.

During his second term, the Trump administration pursued a policy of regulatory rollback in artificial intelligence. In January 2025, President Trump signed Executive Order 14179: Removing Barriers to American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence, which dismantled the Biden-era AI regulatory framework by eliminating mandatory safety testing and reporting requirements for AI systems. This shift emphasizes industry self-regulation to reduce compliance costs but has drawn widespread criticism from opponents and sparked concerns among immigrant communities. These developments underscore how partisan politics in the U.S. have fueled significant unpredictability in AI governance, particularly regarding its application in immigration and

other critical sectors.

Moreover, in the legal governance of AI deployment in immigration, a persistent gap remains between regulatory rhetoric and practical enforcement. For instance, in March 2024, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a binding memorandum to all federal agencies mandating “advancements in AI governance, innovation, and risk management,” including requirements such as conducting risk self-assessments, compiling hazard inventories, monitoring AI tools for bias and discrimination, and publicly disclosing technical specifications on official websites. However, by late 2024, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) had failed to fully implement these directives, highlighting systemic challenges in translating policy mandates into operational practice.

3.2 Canada

Canada became the first national government to regulate automated decision-making, laying the groundwork for future AI policies. As Ashley Casovan, former Director of Data Architecture and Innovation at the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, explains, this early initiative has enabled Canada to develop a forward-thinking legal framework for AI in immigration management. The country’s proactive integration of policies and robust technological infrastructure give its framework distinct advantages in this field. Canada has since systematically built a comprehensive legal structure governing AI applications in immigration and related sectors. This evolution is marked by key milestones in regulatory development: (a) The Directive on Automated Decision-Making which was introduced on March 4, 2019; (b) Updates to the Guide on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence which was revised on February 20, 2024; (c) The recent release of the Guide to Peer Review of Automated Decision Systems on January 7, 2025. These policy instruments reflect Canada’s commitment to establishing a coherent and evidence-based approach to AI governance.

Although the EU’s AI Act—enacted in 2024—classifies AI systems used in immigration as high-risk, Canada’s current policies (such as the Directive on Automated Decision-Making) remain non-binding administrative guidelines. Notably, Canada’s legal and regulatory framework for AI in immigration enforcement may face practical limitations. For instance, the existing Directive on Automated Decision-Making requires that “meaningful explanations” be provided but fails to define their required depth or establish standardized disclosure formats.

3.3 European Union

The European Union (EU) has established itself as a global pioneer in artificial intelligence (AI) regulation. The EU AI Act extends its reach beyond the EU’s borders – many of its provisions apply regardless of whether the provider is based within the EU or in a third country. By adopting a horizontal regulatory approach, the EU ensures consistent standards across all sectors while allowing for necessary sector-specific adaptations, particularly in sensitive areas like migration and law enforcement.

A risk-proportionate governance framework is critical in avoiding the pitfalls of one-size-fits-all regulation. This approach helps prevent oversight mechanisms from becoming either excessively lenient or unduly stringent. The AI Act applies to any provider or entity deploying an AI system where “the output produced by the system is intended to be used” within the EU. Foreign suppliers must appoint an authorized representative in the EU to ensure compliance. However, certain entities are exempt: public authorities of third countries, international organizations under police/judicial cooperation agreements, and AI systems intended for military defense or national security purposes. This broad scope demonstrates the regulation’s comprehensive intent to govern AI systems and their applications effectively.

In practice, while the EU ensures equal fundamental rights protections for both EU and non-EU citizens on a technological level, it permits EU institutions and member states to deploy high-risk AI systems – such as emotion recognition technologies – for public security purposes. Simultaneously, the Act reduces transparency obligations for law enforcement authorities, creating significant leeway for member states to adopt advanced AI technologies with potentially invasive capabilities.

4. Critical Analysis and Policy Implications

The development and deployment of artificial intelligence algorithms inherently involve technological choices that significantly impact fundamental rights. When AI is deliberately integrated, it offers potential benefits such as enhanced fraud

detection capabilities and improved, timely access to information essential for decision-making. Importantly, when designing AI governance frameworks for immigration systems, the most effective regulatory approaches are those that are meticulously tailored to a nation's unique socio-economic context and administrative capabilities. Moreover, it is imperative to govern AI adoption with a human-centric approach, ensuring ethical and responsible use to protect vulnerable populations and uphold democratic values. Furthermore, adopting AI also should be governed for humanity. In the context of globalization, efforts can be made to facilitate the exchange among countries regarding management strategies for the application of artificial intelligence in the field of immigration. For instance, standardizing AI training data sources and usage practices for achieving transparent and rights-based accountability across jurisdictions, and promoting cooperation, thereby jointly facilitating a favorable environment for the global AI application ecosystem.

Funding

no

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Reference

- [1] Nalbandian, L. (2022). An eye for an 'I': A critical assessment of artificial intelligence tools in migration and asylum management. *CMS*, 10, 32.
- [2] McAuliffe, M., & Triandafyllidou, A. (2021). World migration report 2022. International Organization for Migration (IOM).
- [3] Lawrence, C., Cui, I., & Ho, D. E. (2023). The bureaucratic challenge to AI governance: An empirical assessment of implementation at U.S. federal agencies. In *AIES '23: Proceedings of the 2023 AAAI/ACM Conference on AI, Ethics, and Society* (p. 626).
- [4] Maslej, N., Fattorini, L., Perrault, R., Parli, V., Reuel, A., Brynjolfsson, E., Etchemendy, J., Ligett, K., Lyons, T., Manyika, J., Niebles, J. C., Shoham, Y., Wald, R., & Clark, J. (2024). The AI Index 2024 annual report. AI Index Steering Committee, Institute for Human-Centered AI, Stanford University.
- [5] Chen, T. (2022). Overview of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's artificial intelligence strategy and preliminary implementation plan. *China Security and Protection*, 4, 110–114.
- [6] Salo-Pöntinen, H., & Saariluoma, P. (2022). Reflections on the human role in AI policy formulations: How do national AI strategies view people? *Discover Artificial Intelligence*, 2, 3.
- [7] Toupin, S. (2022). Artificial intelligence as im/mobility: Preliminary thoughts on understanding the use of AI in Canada's immigration system. *Journal of Labor Economics*.
- [8] Administrative law and the governance of automated decision making: A critical look at Canada's directive on automated decision making. (2021). *UBC Law Review*, 54(1), Article 7.
- [9] Artificial intelligence (AI) at Schengen borders: Automated processing, algorithmic profiling and facial recognition in the era of techno-solutionism. (2021). *European Journal of Migration and Law*, 23, 457–484.
- [10] Ozkul, D. (2023). Automating immigration and asylum: The uses of new technologies in migration and asylum governance in Europe. *Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford*, 38–39.
- [11] Au-Yong Oliveira, A. (2019). Recent developments of interoperability in the EU Area of Freedom, Security and Justice: Regulations (EU) 2019/817 and 2019/818. *UNIO – EU Law Journal*, 5, 128–135.
- [12] U.K. Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT), & Office for AI (OAI). (2023). A pro-innovation approach to AI regulation. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 25.
- [13] Park, S. (2024). Bridging the global divide in AI regulation: A proposal for a contextual, coherent, and commensurable framework. *Washington International Law Journal*, 33, 225.

Pain · Redemption · Regeneration: An Interpretation of Oedipus the King under Nietzsche's "Apollo-Dionysus" Paradigm

Yuxiang Deng*

Jiangsu University, School of Literature, Zhenjiang, 212013, China

*Corresponding author: Yuxiang Deng, 2782410832@qq.com

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: Sophocles' masterpiece, Oedipus Rex, is a timeless classic in the history of Western drama. Aristotle hailed it as the "perfect tragedy". The Birth of Tragedy is an important early work by Nietzsche. In this work, he proposed the theory of the opposition between the Apollonian and Dionysian dual impulses. This theory is of epoch - making significance. In this book, Nietzsche uses language full of metaphors. He not only talks about the aesthetic meaning of Greek art but also shows the metaphysical thinking about life. At the same time, Oedipus the King is a typical tragic art piece from ancient Greece. In this tragedy, the Apollonian spirit and the Dionysian spirit are mixed together. This combination helps to reconstruct the meaning of life metaphysically.

keywords: Apollonian Spirit; Dionysian Spirit; Nietzsche; Oedipus the King

Published: May 26, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.396>

1.The enchanted mirage of dreams

In The Birth of Tragedy, the ideas of Apollo and Dionysus are really important for understanding Nietzsche's thoughts about art. Nietzsche said, "These names are borrowed from the Greeks who revealed the profound secret doctrines of their view of art to the discerning mind precisely not in concepts but rather in the insistently clear forms of their pantheon." It's clear that these two ideas are connected in a way that they work together, not that they're against each other.

The spirit of Apollo shouldn't be simply seen as rationality or order. Similarly, the spirit of Dionysus can't be just thought of as frenzy or desire. Nietzsche uses the "interaction" of these two principles to break down the artistic forms of the Greek world. Two different instincts exist together. They're often in obvious conflict. They stimulate each other to create more powerful expressions while still keeping their opposing tension.

The word 'art' seems to bring this duality together on the surface. But through a kind of Greek 'will' in a more abstract sense, these forces finally come together. In the end, this leads to the Attic tragedy^[1]. The Attic tragedy is an artwork that has both Dionysian and Apollonian elements.

At ancient Greek tragedy performances, the lines between the chorus, actors, and the audience were probably not as clear. The audience actively "took part" in the drama that was happening on stage. The illusory quality of Apollo could protect the audience from the strong influence of Dionysus or make it less intense. When these three elements came together, the presence of Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, showed up.

His mystical power made Apollo's emotional resonance even stronger. It reached a really high - level state, but at the same time, it also hit its limit. In this way, it showed the symbolic manifestation of the inner radiance of Apollo.

The tragedy Oedipus the King can be seen as an Apollonian symbol of the Dionysian experience. As you gradually uncover the layers of Apollo's symbolism, you'll find the underlying Dionysian essence. This finally leads to the experience of "the One." Oedipus goes through extreme suffering and falls apart, but he achieves self - redemption. This process shows Nietzsche's support for the eternal instinct of life, which is a spirit of sublation.

Although Oedipus can't go beyond the limitations of human beings or get over human weakness. In fact, he fails to reach the "superman" ideal that Nietzsche put forward in "Thus Spoke Zarathustra". However, he still shows the Dionysian spirit under the veil of death and shows a tough vitality.

2.The enchanted mirage of dreams

In The Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche explains the relationship between the Apollonian and Dionysian spirits. He does this through the states of "dream" and "intoxication". Dreams are the most direct way the Apollonian spirit shows itself. When people are dreaming, they can get away from the pain of reality for a short time. They enter a world of illusions and beauty. In this world, everyone can be an artist.

Apollo is the god of form and beauty. He governs these illusions. He embodies reason, order, and idealized aesthetics. The illusions that come from dreams give people a short break from suffering. They also give meaning to life. All of this is because of Apollo's influence. Apollo is the "shining, radiant one." His gaze is as bright as the sun. Even when he is angry, he still keeps his solemn beauty. But there is an important limit in Apollo's dreams. It is the "principle of individuation."

Dreams let people see beauty, but they stop people from really dealing with the pain and danger in real life. As Schopenhauer says, dreams are just illusions. It's like a dream inside a dream, and human consciousness gets wrapped up in these illusions^[2]. The Apollonian spirit depends on these illusions and shows beauty and wisdom through art and music. However, staying in the world of dreams for a long time isn't a good thing.

As Nietzsche said, when people get lost in the illusory veil of dreams, the Dionysian impulse wakes up. It tries to go beyond this false appearance.

In Oedipus the King, Oedipus shows the Apollonian spirit. A quote says, "So a worldly solution to the tragic dissonance was sought; the hero, after undergoing sufficient torture at the hands of fate, harvested his well-deserved reward in a stately marriage, in divine attestations of honour." In the light of Apollo, Oedipus is a perfect hero. To avoid the prophecy of the oracle, he leaves his adoptive parents. On the way, he kills an unreasonable passer - by. Then he solves the riddle of the Sphinx and becomes a hero in Thebes.

Yet, it's exactly this wisdom and perfection of Apollo that hides his inner destiny. Here, the principle of individuation shows its cruel dialectic. Oedipus leaves Corinth. This symbolizes his rejection of his "adopted son" identity and his pursuit of his "true self." Ironically, this leads him onto the path of fate that was already decided.

This "rational" choice paradox supports Schopenhauer's claim of "the self - devouring of the will". When individuation reaches its peak, it turns into a tool for self - destruction^[3].

Under the influence of the oracle, Oedipus gets caught in a dreamy illusion. He is too confident in his own wisdom and ignores the unchangeable plan of fate. When he solves the Sphinx's riddle, Oedipus wins honor and glory. It seems that he has affirmed the victory of the Apollonian ideal. But the answer to the riddle, which is "man", is just an abstract idea of wisdom. It doesn't show its deeper meaning. Just like his answer to the riddle shows his intelligence, Oedipus misses the external factor of his "fate".

He is under the glow of wisdom, but he doesn't understand how serious fate can be. The Sphinx's riddle quietly shows how fragile humans are. It also replaces the real meaning of fate with the idea of "man." Oedipus's wisdom hides this important understanding from him. When Oedipus finds out that he has killed his father and married his mother, he gets into a situation where he destroys himself. In the end, his wisdom works against him. His rational thinking and his focus on "dreams" make him unable to get away from his final fate.

He tries hard to govern the city - state. He firmly faces the terrifying plague. He tries to fit what he thinks of as the "world"

into the “rational” framework he understands. It’s like a sculptor turning messy marble into art. He creates and at the same time cuts out the basic nature of life.

During Oedipus’s self - destruction, the pin breaks through Apollo’s peaceful dream. It slowly shows us a very ancient and deep abyss. It suggests a more real rhythm of life.

3.The Ecstasy of Intoxication

The core symbol of the Dionysian spirit is music. As Welles points out, a symbol isn’t just a one - time metaphor. It forms a system by being repeated and reproduced, and it becomes an important part of myth. The music of Dionysus is very different from that of Apollo. Apollo’s music brings tranquility and rationality, while Dionysus’ music makes people feel fear and get intoxicated. Music is an expression of will. To go beyond its own desires and reach the world of pure art, it has to capture concrete images.

You can never use language to fully express how deep music is. Instead, music goes beyond language. It becomes a kind of indescribable power that shows the deep essence of the Dionysian spirit. In ancient Greek tragedy, the Dionysian spirit is shown not only in music but also in the performance of the satyr chorus.

The satyr chorus shows the ultimate release of the Dionysian spirit. It blurs the lines between actors and the audience. All the participants are immersed in the Dionysian worship ceremony. They break free from the limits of daily life. In this process, the satyrs are not just followers of the Dionysian spirit. They are also the embodiment of it.

When the actors perform, the audience stops being passive spectators. Instead, they establish a direct connection with Dionysus through the actors. They can experience the deep expression of nature and instinct. The choral odes in the play are not just emotional decorations. They are the expressions of the Dionysian spirit. When Oedipus’ rational story falls apart, the choral polyphony shows the many - sided nature of fate. It breaks down the false wholeness of the Apollonian monologue.

Nietzsche says that the Dionysian spirit means going beyond individuality, society, and reality. It means entering a deeper and more complicated state. This state tries to understand the overall features of life. The Dionysian spirit strongly affirms life. It does this even when there is pain and conflict. It celebrates all of life. It also admits that birth and destruction, creation and annihilation, are one.

In a tragic world, the power of Dionysus allows artists, actors, and audiences to experience pain and joy together. They can find a kind of joy that goes beyond individuality in collective ecstasy. This experience challenges the attitude of pessimistic resignation. It also shows a deep affirmation of the vitality of life.

The Dionysian spirit isn’t just a symbol of having a wild time and giving in to desires. It’s also a deep - seated philosophy about how we exist. It stresses that people need to face and really get involved in every single moment of life. This includes the parts that are super painful and tragic.

In Oedipus the King, the Dionysian spirit and fate interact in a special way. Oedipus tries to use his wisdom to change his fate. However, he can’t get away from the oracle’s plan. The unstoppable nature of fate makes his trust in wisdom useless. This shows the limits of Apollonian rationality. His parents’ fates, the oracle’s prediction, and his own wisdom are all closely connected to the Dionysian spirit.

Oedipus wakes up from a dreamy illusion and finally gets into the Dionysian state of being drunk. He blinds himself. He doesn’t choose to follow Jocasta’s way of suicide as atonement. Instead, he endures physical pain and spiritual torment in the darkness. This is a deep act of self - destruction and rebirth. Oedipus’ story is a classic symbol of the conflict and fusion between the Apollonian and Dionysian spirits.

As Dodds points out, “Oedipus’ greatness doesn’t come from his important position in the secular world. It comes from his courage and determination when he faces the truth.” When Oedipus blinds himself, this act seems to be the end of Apollonian visual understanding on the surface. But in essence, it shows a Dionysian awakening. Under his mask that seems to be full of wisdom, there is an inescapable fate and the wild power of Dionysus.

The Dionysian impulse finally breaks through Apollo’s rational constraints. This allows Oedipus to wake up from the illusion. He can then have a deep understanding of himself and his fate. His self - destruction and rebirth show the Dionysian spirit. They also reflect Nietzsche’s strong affirmation of life’s instincts and the essence of existence. Through this extreme

experience, Oedipus achieves a transcendent self - awakening. He gains a full understanding of the essence of fate and the Dionysian spirit.

Oedipus the King is a classic work of ancient Greek tragedy. It fully includes the main elements of the tragic spirit. The tragic spirit is not just about showing how fate can be unpredictable. It's also a deep description of how humans struggle and resist when they face a destiny that can't be changed. Oedipus can't change his fate. But his journey of self - destruction and then regeneration shows the dignity and strength that humans have when they face forces they can't overcome.

This tragic spirit isn't just about admitting that there is suffering. It's a strong affirmation of the natural vitality of life. The wild celebration of the Dionysian spirit sets people free from restrictions^[4]. It makes them fully affirm life. In the story of Oedipus, the Dionysian spirit finally goes beyond the illusions of the Apollonian. It solves the conflict between wisdom and fate. It shows a deep understanding and acceptance of the real nature of life.

4.The Clash and Convergence of Apollo and Dionysus

The unique charm of ancient Greek tragedy lies in its ability. It can turn the essence of existence shown by the Dionysian spirit into an aesthetic experience. Humans can bear this experience. And this transformation is mediated by the elegant forms created by the Apollonian spirit.

In Sophocles' Oedipus the King, the story follows the three unities. The whole narrative happens within one day. The setting always stays at the palace in Thebes. And the conflicts are solved through looking back and having conversations. This creates a strict dramatic structure, which is an example of Apollonian form. This structure is like a prism. It takes the messy forces of fate and turns them into a causal chain that we can understand.

Oedipus' search for truth seems like a victory of logical thinking. But actually, it's a plan set by fate. In the book, he shouts, "Let the storm that destroys me come even more fiercely!" Then, the harsh truth (Dionysian) hidden in beautiful words (Apollonian) breaks out completely.

The odes sung by the chorus make this dialectical tension even more obvious. When the priests sing in harmony, saying, "The happiness of humans is as short - lived as the morning dew," the beautiful hexameter, which is a sign of Apollonian order, is very different from the lyrics that show life's impermanence, which is a Dionysian idea. This "dance in chains" is an example of Nietzsche's idea of "the mixing of dream and intoxication." The audience is calmed by the Apollonian beauty at the same time as they are shocked by the Dionysian power.

Just like the violent scenes shown on ancient Greek vases with geometric patterns, the formal restraint makes the content's brutality more obvious. This makes the artistic view of the abyss even more incisive.

It's important to notice that although the Dionysian element stands out in Greek tragedies, it doesn't make the Apollonian element less important. Apollo's presence brings clarity and definition. It allows the chaos and passion of Dionysus to be shown in real artistic forms. Apollo turns the universality of Dionysus into specific artistic images. He also sets limits for Dionysian energy. This makes sure that the energy stays strong without taking over the whole work.

Furthermore, Apollo's intervention makes sure that the Dionysian force doesn't make the audience feel despair or be overwhelmed. Instead, it allows the audience to experience the profound pain and destructiveness of life from an aesthetic distance. This distance lets the audience watch the tragedy safely and keeps them from being swallowed up by primal forces. In ancient Greek tragedies, the opposition and fusion of Apollo and Dionysus show the complexity of the will to live.

This binary dynamic shows that humans are always struggling between reason and emotion, order and chaos. It also emphasizes that art has a special role in expressing the will to live. When the audience sees the artistic way of showing this opposition and combination, they can think about their own existence. They can also explore the deeper meaning of life. In the end, they can really understand and accept the essence of life.

Just like the war scenes on ancient Greek vases, they are drawn with simple patterns and single colors. These vases can show the brutality of the war well. Similarly, when artists use restraint in their work, it can make their observations seem deeper.

The greatness of tragic art is that it creates a "third space" where both Apollonian and Dionysian elements exist together. In this space, Apollo weaves Oedipus' story into a complex dramatic structure. It's like a veil that partly covers a face.

On the other hand, Dionysus keeps tearing at this thin veil. He makes us face the absurdity of existence directly. The smarter

Oedipus gets, the more caught up he is in the web of fate. The more he looks for light, the darker his way becomes. This two-sided view doesn't solve any contradictions^[5]. Instead, it shows the dance of paradoxes, just like the wave - particle duality in quantum physics. Apollo and Dionysus together give us a full understanding of existence.

Modern characters like Kafka's K, who might never get into the castle, and Camus' Sisyphus, who keeps doing the same task forever, are like the Oedipal cycles of "pursuing truth - falling into absurdity." But the art of tragedy shows that absurdity can be a source of poetry. Even when we face the most confusing and difficult questions in life, we have to give a positive answer. Paradoxically, when we realize the limits of existence, we can better embrace the present moment.

5.Conclusion

Greek tragedy looks into the meaning of life through how the Apollonian and Dionysian principles show up. In this way, it examines the metaphysical aspects of existence. Human life for each person is limited. But according to Nietzsche's philosophy, the life - will, which is the essence of the world, is limitless. Trying to pursue the limitless with the limited is clearly absurd and tragic. Actually, as Nietzsche's work suggests, artistic instinct might be the key to understanding the mystery of life.

Consequently, when we're trying to explore the endless depths of life, we can't be separated from the gods of artistic instinct—the Apollonian and Dionysian forces.

Funding

no

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Reference

- [1] Nietzsche, F. (2000). *The birth of tragedy* (D. Smith, Trans.). Oxford University Press.
- [2] Sophocles. (2001). *The complete plays* (P. Roche, Trans.). First Signet Classics Printing.
- [3] Bitterncourt, N. R. (2013). Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, the eternity of life of the Will and the unscathed creative force of the Dionysian spirit. *Voluntas*, 4(1), 03–32.
- [4] Nikolarea, E. (2012). Greek tragedy in translation: Sophocles' Oedipus the King in English. *Translation Review*, 46(1), 24–43.
- [5] Jon, P. (2020). The Oedipus plays of Sophocles. *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 70(280), 655–657.

The Rise of Digital Currency and the Adaptability of Traditional Monetary Policy Transmission Mechanisms

Yixin Chen*

School of International Business, Yunnan University of Finance and Economics, Yunnan Kunming, 650021, China

**Corresponding author: Yixin Chen*

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: The rise of digital currency is profoundly transforming the traditional monetary policy transmission mechanism. With the widespread adoption of central bank digital currency (CBDC) and private digital currencies, central banks face new challenges in regulating money supply, interest rate management, and financial stability. The decentralization and cross-border circulation of digital currencies may weaken the role of traditional financial intermediaries, affecting the transmission of monetary policy through credit, interest rates, and asset prices. At the same time, their digital and traceable nature offers new opportunities for policy implementation, enabling central banks to monitor capital flows more accurately, thereby enhancing monetary policy transparency and execution efficiency. Against this backdrop, this paper explores how to optimize regulatory frameworks, adjust monetary policy tools, and strengthen international cooperation to ensure the stability and effectiveness of monetary policy in the digital currency era.

Keywords: Digital Currency; Monetary Policy Transmission; Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC); Financial Regulation; Cross-Border Payments

Published: May 26, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.397>

1.Introduction

With rapid technological advancements, digital currencies, particularly central bank digital currencies (CBDCs), are gradually becoming an integral part of the global financial system. Since the emergence of private digital currencies such as Bitcoin, the scope of digital currency applications has continuously expanded, encompassing payments, investments, and value storage. The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted the advantages of digital currencies, particularly their convenience in payments and decentralized nature, drawing increased attention from governments worldwide^[1]. Many central banks have already launched or are planning to issue digital currencies, such as China's Digital Currency Electronic Payment (DCEP) and the European Central Bank's Digital Euro. These developments signify the transition of digital currencies from theoretical discussions to practical implementation, driving profound changes in financial systems.

However, the rapid rise of digital currencies poses unprecedented challenges to the traditional monetary policy transmission mechanism. Conventional monetary policies influence economic activity through tools such as interest rate adjustments, open market operations, and interbank credit channels. Yet, with the widespread adoption of digital currencies, the effectiveness and transmission pathways of traditional monetary policies may be disrupted. For instance, the growing use of digital currencies could diminish the role of banks as financial intermediaries, altering capital flows and credit supply, which in turn affects the execution of monetary policies. Moreover, the increasing prevalence of cross-border digital currency transactions

adds another layer of complexity to international monetary policy coordination. Therefore, studying the challenges and opportunities presented by digital currencies in relation to traditional monetary policy transmission is not only theoretically significant but also provides valuable insights for policymakers and financial regulators.

2. Overview of Digital Currency

2.1 Definition and Classification of Digital Currency

Digital currency, as the name suggests, is a form of money that exists in a purely digital format. Unlike traditional physical cash or paper money, digital currency does not rely on a physical medium but circulates in electronic form. Depending on the issuing entity and usage scenarios, digital currencies can be categorized into the following types:

Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC): CBDC is a digital form of money issued and regulated by a national central bank, typically considered an extension of fiat currency in digital format. Its key features include government endorsement, legal tender status, and broad acceptance. The primary objectives of CBDC include improving payment efficiency, strengthening financial supervision, and enhancing the transmission of monetary policy.

Private Digital Currency: These currencies are issued by non-governmental entities and represent a decentralized monetary system. Examples include Bitcoin, Ethereum, and other cryptocurrencies that rely on blockchain technology, offering decentralization, anonymity, and global accessibility. Although not recognized as legal tender by governments, these currencies have attracted significant attention due to their speculative value and practical applications in certain sectors.

Stablecoins: Stablecoins are digital currencies pegged to a fiat currency or asset to minimize price volatility. A prominent example is USDT (Tether), which maintains a 1:1 peg to the U.S. dollar. Designed to offer price stability, stablecoins serve as a reliable medium of exchange in digital transactions.

Electronic Money (E-Money): E-money refers to funds stored and transferred electronically, usually issued by financial institutions or payment platforms. Examples include balances in Alipay and WeChat Pay, which, while not functioning as full-fledged currencies, are widely used for daily transactions^[2].

2.2 Development History and Current Status of Digital Currency

The development of digital currency can be traced back to the late 1980s when digital payment tools such as credit cards and electronic wallets laid the groundwork for future digital currencies. However, the first true digital currency emerged in 2009 with the creation of Bitcoin, marking the beginning of a decentralized and intermediary-free financial system. Bitcoin addressed the reliance on intermediaries in traditional financial structures and leveraged blockchain technology to enable secure and transparent transactions.

Since the launch of Bitcoin, digital currencies have undergone multiple phases of development. In the early 2010s, the introduction of Ethereum and other cryptocurrencies further advanced blockchain technology, enabling the implementation of smart contracts and decentralized applications. During this period, the private digital currency market flourished, despite significant price volatility, attracting interest from investors and certain user groups due to its decentralization and potential value.

By 2014, central banks and financial regulators worldwide had begun recognizing the potential impact of digital currencies on the traditional financial system, leading to varying degrees of regulatory responses. The digital currency market experienced a surge after 2017, fueled by innovations such as Initial Coin Offerings (ICOs) and Decentralized Finance (DeFi), which expanded the applications of digital currencies beyond simple transactions.

In the 2020s, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic, digital currency adoption accelerated. Many central banks initiated research and pilot programs for CBDCs, with notable examples including China's Digital Currency Electronic Payment (DCEP), the European Central Bank's Digital Euro, and the Bahamas' Sand Dollar. Today, digital currency is no longer confined to the realm of speculative assets but is gradually becoming an integral part of the financial system.

2.3 Technical Characteristics and Functions of Digital Currency

The technological foundation of digital currency primarily relies on blockchain, cryptographic security, and distributed ledger technology. These innovations provide digital currencies with decentralization, transparency, and security. The key technical characteristics and functions are as follows:

Blockchain Technology: Blockchain serves as the core technology of digital currencies, recording transactions through a decentralized ledger that ensures transparency and immutability. Its decentralized nature eliminates reliance on centralized institutions such as banks or governments, reducing intermediation costs in the financial system.

Cryptographic Security: Digital currencies employ cryptographic techniques to secure transactions. Using public and private key encryption, digital transactions remain anonymous and tamper-proof while preventing fraud and double-spending issues. Cryptographic algorithms also regulate the supply and circulation of digital currencies, mitigating risks of inflation or deflation.

Decentralization and Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT): A defining feature of digital currencies is their decentralized nature, which removes the need for central banks or financial institutions to validate transactions. Distributed ledger technology ensures that transactions are securely stored and verified across multiple nodes, enhancing the resilience and integrity of the digital currency system. This capability also enables seamless cross-border transactions without reliance on traditional banking networks.

Smart Contracts and Decentralized Applications : Platforms like Ethereum support smart contracts, which execute predefined agreements automatically without human intervention, reducing fraud and increasing efficiency. Decentralized applications further expand the use cases of blockchain technology, offering financial services, supply chain management, and insurance solutions without centralized control.

Payment and Transaction Functionality: The primary function of digital currency is to facilitate payments and transactions. Digital currencies enable fast, low-cost domestic and cross-border transactions while bypassing traditional banking intermediaries. This reduces transaction fees and processing times, making digital currencies an attractive alternative to conventional payment systems. Additionally, digital currencies enhance security, minimizing risks associated with fraud and financial theft in traditional payment networks.

3. Framework of Traditional Monetary Policy Transmission Mechanism

3.1 Objectives and Tools of Traditional Monetary Policy

3.1.1 Primary Objectives of Traditional Monetary Policy

The main goal of traditional monetary policy is to regulate the money supply and interest rates to achieve price stability, promote employment, and sustain long-term economic growth. The focus of monetary policy may vary depending on a country's economic conditions and stage of development, but it generally includes the following key objectives:

Price Stability: Maintaining price stability is a core objective of most central banks. Excessive price fluctuations can lead to inflation or deflation, affecting economic predictability and stability. By controlling the money supply, central banks aim to keep inflation at a moderate and stable level to support sustainable economic development.

Full Employment: Monetary policy plays a crucial role in promoting economic growth and job creation. In times of economic downturn, central banks often implement expansionary monetary policies to reduce unemployment and stimulate economic recovery.

Economic Growth: Over the long term, monetary policy should also foster sustainable economic growth. Central banks adjust interest rates and money supply to influence investment and consumption, thereby driving economic expansion.

Financial Stability: In addition to macroeconomic stability, central banks use monetary policy to maintain financial system stability. This includes preventing financial crises, managing systemic risks, and ensuring sufficient market liquidity.

3.1.2 Tools of Traditional Monetary Policy

To achieve these objectives, central banks primarily rely on the following monetary policy instruments:

Interest Rate Policy: By adjusting benchmark interest rates (such as the lending rate, deposit rate, or reserve requirement ratio), central banks influence market interest rates and, in turn, economic activity. Lowering interest rates encourages borrowing, investment, and consumption, while raising interest rates helps curb inflation.

Open Market Operations (OMO): Central banks buy or sell government securities to regulate banking system liquidity. Purchasing securities injects liquidity into the financial system, while selling securities absorbs excess liquidity, thereby influencing interest rates and money supply.

Reserve Requirement Ratio: Central banks adjust commercial banks' reserve requirements to influence their lending capacity. Lowering reserve requirements allows banks to lend more, stimulating economic activity, whereas raising reserve requirements tightens credit supply and controls inflation.

Standing Lending Facility and Refinancing Tools: These mechanisms allow commercial banks to borrow from the central bank to ensure liquidity, particularly during financial market stress.

3.2 The Basic Process of Monetary Policy Transmission Mechanism

3.2.1 Financial Market Channel

Monetary policy first affects financial markets by influencing interest rates, which subsequently impact borrowing costs for businesses and households. When central banks lower benchmark interest rates, commercial banks also reduce lending rates, making loans more affordable. This leads to higher investment and consumer spending. Conversely, higher interest rates increase borrowing costs, dampening economic activity.

3.2.2 Credit Channel

Monetary policy also affects bank credit supply, which plays a crucial role in financing business expansion and household consumption. By adjusting reserve requirements or conducting open market operations, central banks influence banks' liquidity. Increased liquidity enables banks to extend more loans, fueling economic growth. Conversely, tight liquidity discourages lending and may slow down economic activity.

3.2.3 Asset Price Channel

Monetary policy influences asset prices, including stocks, real estate, and bonds. Lower interest rates typically drive up asset prices, as investors seek higher returns from equities and real estate. Rising asset prices generate a wealth effect, encouraging more consumer spending. Additionally, firms benefit from higher valuations, which improve their financing conditions and investment capacity.

3.2.4 Exchange Rate Channel

Changes in monetary policy impact a country's exchange rate. Lower interest rates can lead to currency depreciation, enhancing the competitiveness of exports and stimulating external demand. Conversely, higher interest rates may strengthen the domestic currency, making exports more expensive and reducing foreign demand.

3.2.5 Expectations Channel

Beyond direct policy tools, central banks also shape economic expectations through forward guidance and policy announcements. By signaling future policy directions, central banks influence market behavior, consumer confidence, and business investment decisions. Well-managed expectations can enhance the effectiveness of monetary policy interventions.

3.3 Effectiveness and Limitations of the Transmission Mechanism

3.3.1 Effectiveness of Traditional Monetary Policy

In theory, the monetary policy transmission mechanism effectively influences economic activity through financial markets, credit supply, asset prices, and exchange rates. Under normal economic conditions, central banks can stimulate or restrain growth by adjusting interest rates, ensuring inflation control, and promoting employment. Particularly during periods of weak economic growth or deflationary risks, expansionary monetary policies can lower borrowing costs, encouraging investment and consumption to drive economic recovery.

3.3.2 Limitations of Monetary Policy

Despite its effectiveness, traditional monetary policy faces several challenges, particularly in the context of globalization and digital transformation.

Reduced Effectiveness in a Globalized Economy: The increasing integration of global capital markets has weakened the effectiveness of domestic monetary policy. With interest rate convergence across economies, central banks may find it difficult to achieve their intended policy outcomes solely through domestic rate adjustments.

Constraints in the Banking System: The credit transmission channel can be weakened by factors such as financial institution health and market confidence. If banks face liquidity crises or deteriorating asset quality, they may be reluctant to extend credit, even if monetary policy is expansionary.

Liquidity Trap: In low-interest-rate environments, monetary policy may lose its effectiveness, leading to what is known as a “liquidity trap.” When interest rates approach zero, further reductions may not stimulate borrowing and investment, limiting the central bank’s ability to boost economic activity^[3].

4.Challenges of Digital Currency to Traditional Monetary Policy Transmission Mechanism

4.1 Challenges in Money Supply Control and Interest Rate Management

The rapid development of digital currencies, particularly central bank digital currencies (CBDCs) and private digital currencies, poses significant challenges to the control of money supply and the transmission of interest rate policies. Traditional monetary policy relies on adjusting interest rates to influence commercial bank lending rates, thereby regulating money supply and aggregate demand in the economy. However, the emergence of digital currencies introduces new complexities to this mechanism.

One major challenge is that digital currencies may alter the way money supply is regulated. Traditional monetary supply adjustments typically depend on the credit expansion of the banking system. In contrast, digital currencies, particularly those based on decentralized technologies like blockchain, operate outside traditional banking channels, making it more difficult for central banks to directly control their circulation. This challenge is particularly evident with private digital currencies such as Bitcoin, which have a fixed supply and are beyond the control of central banks, further weakening their influence over monetary aggregates.

Additionally, the high liquidity and low transaction costs of digital currencies may diminish the effectiveness of interest rate adjustments as a monetary policy tool. The widespread adoption of CBDCs, for example, could encourage the public to hold digital currencies directly instead of keeping deposits in commercial banks. As a result, banks’ role as financial intermediaries may be weakened, limiting the ability of central banks to influence lending and borrowing behaviors through interest rate changes.

4.2 Financial Disintermediation and Increased Capital Flow Mobility

The rise of digital currencies is gradually eroding the traditional role of banks as financial intermediaries, a phenomenon known as financial disintermediation. Cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin and Ethereum allow users to conduct peer-to-peer transactions without relying on the banking system. This shift means that conventional monetary policy tools, such as interest rate adjustments and reserve requirement changes, may become less effective in influencing financial markets.

Financial disintermediation not only affects banks’ lending and deposit-taking functions but also promotes greater capital flow mobility. Traditional monetary policy depends on financial institutions acting as intermediaries to regulate capital flows. However, the decentralized nature of digital currencies enables funds to move more freely across borders, bypassing regulatory frameworks and traditional financial constraints. This trend complicates the execution of monetary policy, as external capital flows can undermine domestic monetary policy objectives. In cases where international capital movements intensify, a central bank’s ability to stabilize its economy through monetary policy may be significantly weakened.

4.3 Cross-Border Payments and the Challenge of International Monetary Coordination

The increasing use of digital currencies for cross-border transactions raises new challenges for monetary policy implementation. As stablecoins and CBDCs facilitate more efficient and low-cost international payments, the coordination of global monetary policies becomes increasingly complex.

Traditionally, cross-border payments rely on intermediaries such as international banks and payment systems like SWIFT. Digital currencies, however, allow direct cross-border transfers, reducing reliance on these intermediaries. While this enhances transaction efficiency, it also limits central banks’ ability to regulate cross-border capital flows, exchange rate fluctuations, and fund movements.

Additionally, inconsistencies in cross-border digital currency regulations create regulatory loopholes and arbitrage opportunities, further complicating monetary policy coordination. Different countries impose varying degrees of regulation on digital currencies, leading to fragmented oversight. For instance, some jurisdictions may adopt a more lenient regulatory stance to attract capital inflows, while others may implement strict controls. This regulatory divergence can create financial instability and hinder international efforts to align monetary policies effectively.

4.4 Disruption of the Credit Transmission Channel

A key transmission channel of traditional monetary policy is the bank lending mechanism, through which central banks influence credit supply by adjusting benchmark interest rates and reserve requirements. However, the increasing adoption of digital currencies could disrupt this transmission pathway.

As digital currencies gain popularity, more funds may flow into non-bank financial products and cryptocurrency markets, reducing the volume of traditional bank deposits. Since commercial banks rely on deposits as a primary funding source for lending, a decline in deposits may constrain their ability to extend credit. This could weaken the effectiveness of monetary policy, particularly when central banks attempt to stimulate the economy by lowering interest rates.

Moreover, the high liquidity and decentralized nature of digital currencies may prevent traditional credit channels from responding promptly and effectively to changes in monetary policy. During periods of economic volatility or financial crises, the rapid movement of digital assets and investors' preference for decentralized stores of value could exacerbate credit contractions in the banking sector. Consequently, central banks may find it increasingly difficult to use credit supply adjustments as a reliable tool for monetary policy transmission.

5. Opportunities of Digital Currency for Traditional Monetary Policy Transmission Mechanism

5.1 Enhancing Transparency and Efficiency of Monetary Policy

Digital currency, particularly central bank digital currency (CBDC), is characterized by a high level of digitalization and traceability, making the implementation of monetary policy more transparent and efficient. By leveraging digital currency, central banks can track the flow of funds, monitor user payment behaviors, and assess market reactions with greater accuracy, thereby improving the precision of policy implementation.

One key advantage of digital currency is its real-time traceability, allowing central banks to monitor money circulation without relying on periodic reports from commercial banks. In a traditional monetary system, central banks must depend on monthly or quarterly reports to evaluate economic conditions. However, with digital currency, real-time data on economic activity, inflationary pressures, and market demand can significantly shorten the reaction time for policy adjustments.

Furthermore, the issuance and circulation of digital currency can be automated using smart contracts and other technologies, increasing policy execution efficiency. Central banks could dynamically adjust interest rates and money supply in response to real-time data, improving the adaptability and flexibility of monetary policy.

5.2 Strengthening Financial Stability and Emergency Response Capability

In times of financial crises or economic shocks, digital currency provides central banks with a more effective tool for injecting liquidity into the market, thereby enhancing financial system stability. Traditional monetary policy relies on interbank market operations to stabilize liquidity. However, the high liquidity and electronic nature of digital currency allow central banks to directly distribute funds to businesses and individuals, mitigating liquidity crises more efficiently.

The programmability of digital currency also enables faster policy responses in emergencies. For example, central banks can implement pre-set limits, adjust interest rates, or introduce temporary monetary incentives to stabilize financial markets without waiting for traditional banking mechanisms to process interventions. This enhanced response capability is particularly valuable in addressing sudden economic downturns or financial crises, where rapid monetary adjustments can help prevent panic and restore market confidence.

5.3 Facilitating More Precise Monetary Policy Adjustments

Digital currency provides central banks with more granular and precise policy tools. With real-time data analytics, central banks can monitor capital flows, consumer behavior, and corporate investment activities in greater detail, allowing for more targeted monetary interventions that align with economic conditions.

Unlike traditional cash transactions, digital currency records every transaction, including fund flows, payment purposes, and timestamps. This level of data granularity enables central banks to gain deeper insights into macroeconomic trends and sector-specific financial activities. By analyzing these patterns, central banks can make more accurate assessments of

credit expansion, consumer debt levels, and corporate borrowing trends, thereby implementing tailored monetary policy adjustments.

For instance, if central banks detect excessive consumer credit growth through digital currency transaction data, they can take preemptive tightening measures to prevent economic overheating. Similarly, if investment levels decline in key industries, central banks can implement targeted stimulus measures to encourage economic activity.

5.4 Opportunities for Digital Currency in International Payments

The adoption of digital currency in cross-border payments presents significant opportunities to reduce transaction costs and improve international monetary policy coordination. Traditional cross-border transactions rely on intermediary banks and payment systems, often requiring multiple days to process while incurring high fees. In contrast, digital currency can leverage decentralized networks and real-time settlement mechanisms, drastically reducing both the time and cost of cross-border transactions.

By using digital currency for cross-border payments, central banks can directly engage in bilateral or multilateral transactions without relying on intermediary financial institutions. This direct settlement mechanism lowers transaction fees, enhances payment efficiency, and facilitates seamless international trade and investment.

Additionally, digital currency usage can enhance global monetary policy coordination. As global economic interdependence deepens, central banks must collaborate more closely to manage economic fluctuations. Digital currency-based international transactions provide transparent, real-time financial data, allowing policymakers to assess global capital flows more effectively.

For example, by analyzing cross-border payment data from digital currency transactions, central banks can detect trends in international capital movements and proactively adjust domestic monetary policies to mitigate external shocks. This real-time approach to global economic monitoring can improve monetary policy effectiveness in an increasingly interconnected world.

6. Case Studies

6.1 Implementation of China's Central Bank Digital Currency (DCEP)

Since initiating research on central bank digital currency (DCEP) in 2014, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) has conducted pilot programs across multiple cities. The objectives include improving payment system efficiency, enhancing monetary policy transmission, and mitigating financial risks associated with private digital currencies such as Bitcoin. As a state-backed digital currency, DCEP differs from traditional bank deposits and cash by offering electronic traceability, which significantly impacts monetary policy execution.

One of DCEP's most significant advantages lies in its transparency and real-time data tracking capabilities, which strengthen the central bank's ability to monitor economic activity. Unlike traditional monetary supply management methods, DCEP allows the PBOC to instantaneously access information on fund flows and market demand, enabling more precise monetary adjustments. The ability to directly control the amount of digital currency in circulation ensures faster responses to economic changes, eliminating the delays typically found in traditional banking systems.

DCEP's potential is particularly evident in times of financial crises. With digital currency, the central bank can rapidly inject liquidity into the economy, reinforcing its emergency response capabilities. During economic downturns or financial disruptions, the PBOC can bypass traditional banking intermediaries and directly distribute funds to businesses and individuals. This prevents inefficiencies or delays that could arise from banks' intermediary roles in conventional monetary policy operations.

6.2 Exploration of Digital Currencies in Europe and the United States

6.2.1 Exploration of Digital Currency in Europe

The European Central Bank (ECB) launched the Digital Euro project in 2020, aiming to provide a safer and more convenient payment system while enhancing the effectiveness of monetary policy. Unlike China's DCEP, which is directly distributed by the central bank, the ECB prefers a collaborative model where the central bank works with commercial banks to provide the Digital Euro to the public. This approach helps preserve the traditional intermediary role of banks, preventing disruptions in

the credit transmission channel.

The implementation of the Digital Euro is expected to improve the transparency and efficiency of monetary policy. Through a digitalized payment system, the ECB can monitor capital flows in real-time, adjust money supply, and respond promptly to economic conditions. Additionally, the Digital Euro could reduce cross-border transaction costs, promoting the global circulation of the euro, particularly in payments and trade outside the EU. However, differences in adoption levels and regulatory policies among eurozone member states may pose challenges to the smooth transmission of monetary policy^[4].

6.2.2 Exploration of Digital Currency in the United States

Although the United States has not yet officially launched a central bank digital currency (CBDC), the Federal Reserve has continued its research and exploration of digital currencies. The Digital Dollar initiative focuses on assessing the impact of digital currency on payment systems and financial markets. While the U.S. has not formally introduced a Digital Dollar, the Federal Reserve has already begun collaborating with private enterprises to explore blockchain-based payment systems and other digital currency technologies.

The potential introduction of a Digital Dollar could enhance the Federal Reserve's control over the economy, particularly in terms of monetary policy transmission. By leveraging digital currency, the Fed could monitor capital flows in real-time, precisely regulate money supply, and improve policy transparency. However, the progress of digital currency development in the U.S. has been relatively slow, mainly due to concerns over political factors, privacy protection, and technological security. Additionally, strict regulations on private digital currencies such as Bitcoin may impact the smooth rollout of a government-backed Digital Dollar^[5].

6.3 Comparative Analysis

Differences in Policy Background: China's DCEP is designed to have a direct impact on the domestic economy and payment system, whereas Europe and the United States prefer a gradual implementation of digital currency to preserve the stability of the traditional financial system. China's digital currency places greater emphasis on financial stability, emergency response, and cross-border payments, while Europe and the United States focus more on avoiding potential negative impacts on existing financial markets and monetary policies.

Impact on Monetary Policy Transmission: DCEP in China is likely to have a more direct influence on the transmission of monetary policy, particularly in terms of money supply control and the role of financial intermediaries. In contrast, Europe's Digital Euro and the U.S. Digital Dollar initiatives retain a certain degree of financial intermediation, meaning their impact on traditional monetary policy transmission may be more moderate^[6].

International Coordination and Regulatory Challenges: The cross-border application of China's DCEP faces complex international regulatory challenges, as some countries remain cautious about the internationalization of China's central bank digital currency. Meanwhile, Europe and the United States place greater emphasis on international cooperation, particularly in cross-border payments and monetary policy coordination, relying more on existing global financial frameworks.

7. Policy Recommendations

7.1 Strengthening the Regulatory Framework for Digital Currency

With the widespread adoption of digital currencies, their impact on traditional monetary policy transmission mechanisms is becoming increasingly significant. To ensure the effectiveness of monetary policy, central banks and financial regulators worldwide must develop a comprehensive regulatory framework for digital currencies, preventing potential disruptions to money supply, credit systems, and financial stability.

At the domestic level, countries should establish a unified legal framework that clearly defines regulations for central bank digital currencies (CBDCs), private digital currencies, and stablecoins, including their issuance, circulation, and usage. The roles of commercial banks, payment institutions, and technology companies within the digital currency ecosystem should also be explicitly defined to prevent market disorder and systemic financial risks. Additionally, regulatory agencies can leverage big data and artificial intelligence technologies to monitor digital currency transactions in real time, thereby mitigating risks such as illicit fund flows, money laundering, and other financial crimes^[7].

At the international level, global regulatory coordination is imperative. Due to the inherently cross-border nature of digital

currencies, discrepancies in national regulatory policies may lead to regulatory arbitrage and financial market instability. International organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) should take the lead in harmonizing global digital currency regulations, ensuring that monetary policies across countries do not conflict in the digital currency environment. For instance, establishing an international digital currency regulatory framework through multilateral cooperation could help maintain the stability of the global financial system.

7.2 Innovation and Adjustment of Monetary Policy Tools

Traditional monetary policy tools, such as interest rate adjustments, open market operations, and reserve requirement ratios, have long been the foundation of monetary regulation. However, in the era of digital currency, central banks must adapt and innovate these tools to align with the emerging financial landscape.

First, interest rate policy must be adjusted to accommodate CBDC adoption. If central bank digital currencies gradually replace a portion of bank deposits, commercial banks' lending and deposit businesses may be affected, thereby weakening central banks' ability to regulate interest rates. To address this, central banks could introduce a CBDC interest rate mechanism, setting differentiated interest rates for CBDC deposits and withdrawals. This approach would guide public behavior in digital currency usage, thereby strengthening the effectiveness of monetary policy.

Second, open market operations (OMO) should be restructured for the digital currency era. In the future, central banks could inject liquidity directly into the market through CBDCs without relying on the traditional banking system. For example, during an economic downturn, a central bank could distribute digital currency directly to individuals or businesses to stimulate spending. Conversely, in periods of high inflation, the central bank could use digital mechanisms to limit the circulation speed of CBDCs, thereby controlling money supply growth more effectively^[8].

7.3 Strengthening Cross-Border Coordination of Monetary Policy

First, central banks worldwide must establish multilateral coordination mechanisms to facilitate cross-border CBDC transactions. By signing CBDC interoperability agreements, countries can ensure smooth cross-border circulation of central bank digital currencies while setting clear and transparent cross-border transaction rules to prevent financial market volatility and regulatory arbitrage. Additionally, an international blockchain-based settlement system could be developed to enhance cross-border payment efficiency while maintaining central banks' control over fund flows^[9].

Second, countries should strengthen foreign exchange management mechanisms for digital assets to prevent excessive cross-border capital flows from destabilizing domestic financial markets. For example, central banks could set digital currency exchange quotas or employ smart contract technology to approve large-scale cross-border transactions, thereby mitigating the risks of short-term capital movements impacting exchange rates and monetary policy stability.

Funding

no

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Reference

- [1] Andolfatto. (2018). Assessing the impact of central bank digital currency on private banks. Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Economic Research Working Paper, (11), 26–33.
- [2] Barrdear, J., & Kumhof, M. (2016). The macroeconomics of central bank issued digital currencies. Social Science Electronic Publishing, (605), 3–90.
- [3] Barrdear, J., & Kumhof, M. (2016). The macroeconomics of central bank issued digital currencies. Bank of England Working Paper, (05), 13–19.
- [4] Bernanke, B. S., & Blinder, A. S. (1988). Credit, money, and aggregate demand. The American Economic Review, 78(02), 435–439.
- [5] Bjerg. (2017). Designing new money—the policy trilemma of central bank digital currency. CBS Working Paper, (08), 18–31.

- [6] Bordo, M. D., & Levin, A. T. (2017). Central bank digital currency and the future of monetary policy. NBER Working Paper, (06), 6–9.
- [7] Davoodalhosseini, S. (2018). Central bank digital currency and monetary policy. Bank of Canada Staff Working Paper, (8), 22–34.
- [8] Engert, W., & Fung, B. (2017). Central bank digital currency: Motivations and implications. Bank of Canada Staff Discussion Paper, 47(05), 65–84.
- [9] Friedman, M. (1982). Monetary policy: Theory and practice. *Journal of Money, Credit and Banking*, 14(1), 98–118.

How Undergraduates Should Write Their First Review Paper - An Example from Bibliometric Research

Yile Yu, Yule He, Tiancheng He*

1.Zhejiang University of Technology, Hangzhou, 10337, China

2.University Of Ningbo, Ningbo, 11646, China

*Corresponding author: Tiancheng He

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: Cultivating undergraduate research ability has become an important direction of global higher education reform. However, undergraduates new to academic paper writing generally face problems such as difficulty in selecting a topic to focus on, rustiness in methodology and tools, and weaknesses in academic expression. To address these challenges and difficulties, this study systematically analyzed the research conditions of undergraduates and designed the URCSAS framework for undergraduates to assess their research conditions. Based on undergraduates' research conditions and the characteristics of various types of reviews, the feasibility of publication was innovatively taken into account, and the results of the analysis showed that the bibliometric literature review was the most cost-effective and publishable type of paper for undergraduates. This study then designed a practical path to guide undergraduates in completing their bibliometric literature review papers, including preparation and writing, to provide a reliable path and program to improve undergraduates' research ability and academic enlightenment.

Keywords: Undergraduate Research; Higher Education; Bibliometrics; Literature review

Published: Jun 4, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.381>

1.Introduction

1.1 Research background

Over the years, against the backdrop of the national “Double First-Class” initiative, universities have continuously strengthened their emphasis on cultivating innovative talents. An increasing number of undergraduates have achieved academic enlightenment by participating in scientific research projects, subject competitions, and academic paper writing.

^[1] At present, the construction of modernization with Chinese characteristics is in full swing, and the role of the integrated strategy of “education - science and technology - talent” is prominent. In university education, the academic training and the cultivation of scientific and technological literacy for ordinary students are particularly crucial. However, it is found that undergraduates are generally faced with the problems of difficulty in selecting topics, rusty methods and tools, and tenderness in academic expression when they first come into contact with academic paper writing.^[2] Especially in literature review papers, students are prone to fall into the misunderstanding of simply piling up literature or subjective reviews, lacking the guidance of systematic analysis framework. Bibliometrics, as a tool to quantitatively analyse the distribution of academic results and the evolution of knowledge, provides a structured research path for academic newcomers due to its standardized data sources and intuitive visual presentation.^[3] The application value of the methodology has been recognized by the

academic community for its application in medicine, pedagogy and other fields. Introducing bibliometrics into the guidance of undergraduate thesis writing can not only cultivate their data-driven critical thinking, but also avoid the overly high theoretical depth requirements for beginners in traditional reviews, which has significant teaching appropriateness.

1.2 Research objective

This study aims to construct an operational framework for bibliometric review writing for undergraduate students. The specific goals include: (1) Analyze the research characteristics of undergraduate students and design a framework that they can use for self-evaluation. (2) Comprehensively analyze and compare the features of various literature reviews. (3) With the aim of guiding undergraduate students to complete a bibliometric literature review that conforms to academic norms, design a feasible and complete practical path.

1.3 Statement of data sources

This article does not involve private data. All data and discussions are sourced from public databases such as web of science and CNKI. All citations are marked with their sources.

2. Literature review

A literature review, as an important component of academic writing, serves as both an introductory phase to academic research and a crucial stage for undergraduates to showcase their research abilities. Existing studies indicate that a well-conducted literature review not only helps undergraduates build a foundational understanding of a specific research field but also fosters their critical thinking and research skills throughout the research process. In terms of the structure and writing methods of a literature review, some scholars believe that a good literature review should not only “synthesize” but also integrate “describe” and “evaluate”. For example, Ma Defeng et al. (2023) provided a detailed discussion on the four common pitfalls encountered in writing a literature review, highlighting key considerations in each stage: “selection”, “synthesis”, “description” and “presentation.”^[4] The study by Li Ye et al. (2024), which is based on the social/cognitive genre model, examined how critical thinking is expressed in literature reviews and its developmental characteristics, offering a new perspective for academic writing.^[5] In the practice of writing literature reviews, scholars researching the representational thinking of academic novices in the literature review sections of theses have pointed out the issue of “only synthesizing without describing,” highlighting the importance of balancing “synthesis” and “description” in the review section.

3. Analysis of undergraduate research characteristics

3.1 Cognitive load and information processing characteristics

Undergraduate students show significant stratification in their perceived level of academic tasks.^[6] In the initial stage, undergraduates tend to be “task completion-oriented,” focusing on the breadth rather than the depth of information collection, making them prone to superficial information integration. In the middle stage, due to the simultaneous conduct of multi-threaded tasks, such as theoretical reasoning, methodological practice and the expression of results, the contradiction in the allocation of cognitive resources comes to the fore. In the later stage, the need for goal revision and results iteration creates pressure for retrospective cognitive restructuring. Specifically, when revising their papers, they encounter issues like data deficiencies and theoretical misapplications, necessitating substantial modifications. This dynamic fluctuation in cognitive load is directly related to the fact that learners have not yet established a stable framework for academic thinking, and their information processing patterns are often characterized by fragmentation and disorganization.

3.2 Variations in the adaptability of technological tools

Learners’ ability to adapt to technological tools is limited by their methods of cognitive representation. Graphical interface tools can quickly activate students’ ability to transfer experiences and form positive cognitive feedback because of their preference for embodied cognition, while tools that require abstract logical deduction (e.g., parameterized settings, hierarchical menu systems) can cause operational anxiety because they are beyond their immediate cognitive load-bearing capacity. This difference essentially reflects the transitional characteristics of learners moving from concrete experience to abstract thinking, as well as how well the design of technological tools aligns with students’ cognitive schemes.^[7]

3.3 Pathways to Internalizing Academic Norms

Undergraduates' mechanical memorization of norms can form operational inertia through repetitive training, but the deeper norms related to academic ethics mostly remain at the conceptual level due to the lack of practical contextual support. This gap in internalization leads to frequent occurrences of phenomena in academic writing that are formally compliant but logically contradictory, such as complete citation marks paired with broken chains of argumentation, or standardized data presentation with only a singular analytical dimension. The incomplete internalization of norms becomes a critical bottleneck in the transition of academic identity.

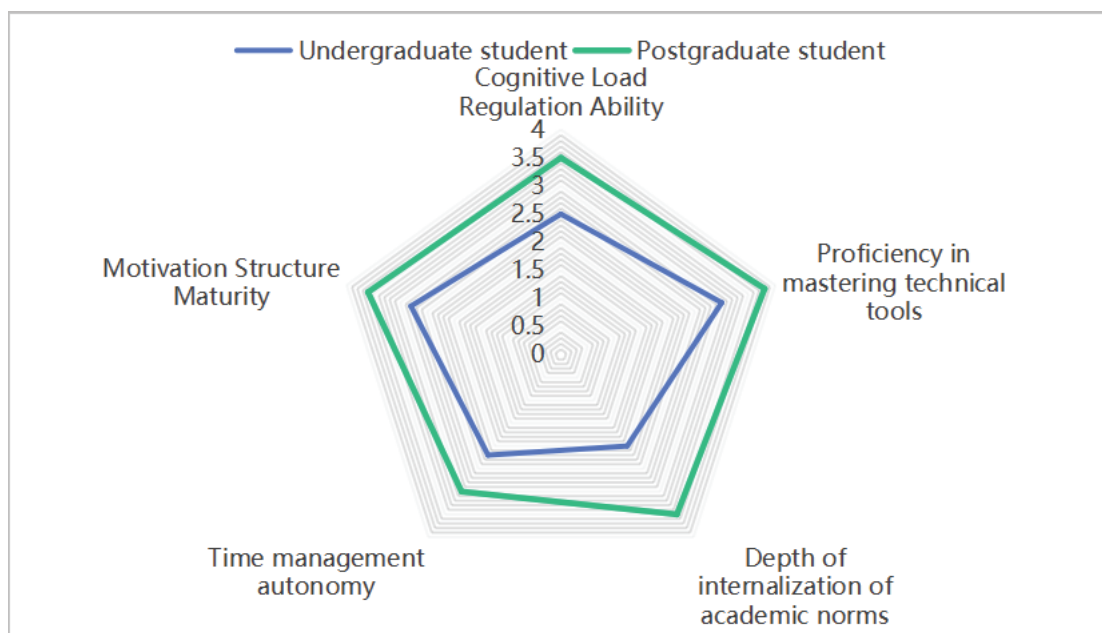
3.4 Nonlinear Aspects of Time Management

The allocation of research time for undergraduates exhibits two nonlinear characteristics: "loose at the beginning and tight at the end" and "tight at the beginning and loose at the end." The "loose at the beginning and tight at the end" pattern occurs when tasks are initially delayed due to unclear objectives and uncertain methods, leading to a high-intensity focus in the middle and later stages as deadlines approach. The "tight at the beginning and loose at the end" pattern describes a situation where substantial effort and time are invested in the early stages of research, but completely or repeated rejection of the initial draft by the advisor can result in learning fatigue and a loss of confidence. These phenomena indicate that undergraduates new to research often lack a sufficient understanding of the interconnections between different stages of the research process.

3.5 Dual-Drive of Motivation Generation

Undergraduate students' motivation to engage in scientific research activities is driven by both external instrumentalism and intrinsic cognition.^[8] Although external incentives can effectively stimulate students' initial involvement in research, they have limited impact on sustaining deep academic engagement. Bibliometrics, by visualizing research outcomes, transforms the abstract research process into tangible cognitive products, allowing students to perceive the trajectory of their academic skill development, thereby maintaining their interest in research. This immediate, visual cognitive feedback, combined with the sense of control gained from using tools, creates a mechanism that strengthens intrinsic motivation, and then helps alleviate the value anxiety experienced by academic novices due to a lack of theoretical depth and encourages their transition from mere task executors to active research explorers.

Figure 1 Radar Chart Comparing the Research Characteristics of Undergraduates and Postgraduates



4. Types of Review Papers

Review papers can be divided into various types according to the research purpose, methodology and application scenarios, mainly including Bibliometric Review, Meta-analysis Review and Systematic Review. Several major types are described in detail below:

4.1 Bibliometric Review

Bibliometric Review is a kind of review methods based on quantitative statistical analysis. It reveals the development trends of disciplines, research hotspots, and the structure of knowledge networks by mining large-scale data from literature databases.

This method often employs information visualization tools such as CiteSpace, VOSviewer, or HistCite to analyze aspects like publication years, author collaboration networks, keyword co-occurrence, and citation relationships.^[9] For instance, Keyword Clustering can identify the core themes within a specific field, while Burst Detection can track the dynamic evolution of research hotspots. Bibliometric reviews are effective for understanding the developmental trajectory of a discipline from a macro perspective and are commonly used in areas such as scientific research policy formulation and discipline competitiveness evaluation. However, their capacity to explore the deeper logical content of the literature is relatively limited.

4.2 Meta-analysis Review

Meta-analysis Review, centered on quantitative synthesis, integrates the Effect Size of independent studies statistically to derive more universally applicable conclusions. This method must be conducted in strict adherence to standardized procedures, including study selection, heterogeneity testing, effect model selection, and publication bias assessment.^[10] For instance, in the medical field, meta-analysis is often used to evaluate the efficacy of drugs or interventions. Its advantage lies in enhancing statistical efficiency and the objectivity of results. However, it requires a high degree of homogeneity and quality in the original studies. If the included studies exhibit heterogeneity or bias, it may lead to distorted conclusions.

4.3 Systematic Review

Systematic reviews are characterized by a transparent and reproducible methodology, aiming to comprehensively collect, evaluate, and synthesize existing evidence on a specific research question. The core steps include defining the research question (using the PICO framework: Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome), developing a search strategy, setting inclusion and exclusion criteria for literature, conducting quality assessments (such as using the ROBIS tool), and synthesizing data. This method typically follows the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) reporting guidelines and presents results through qualitative or quantitative means, such as meta-analysis.^[11] Systematic Review is widely used in the fields of clinical medicine, education, and social sciences, particularly holding a significant position in evidence grading systems. However, they are time-consuming and require a high level of methodological proficiency from researchers.

4.4 Other types

In addition to the aforementioned types, review papers also include Narrative Reviews, which focus primarily on traditional inductive synthesis, providing an overview of the field rather than emphasizing methodological rigor; Scoping Reviews are used to define the scope and conceptual framework of a research area; and Rapid Reviews provide preliminary evidence for policy-making within a limited time-frame. Researchers should select the appropriate type based on their objectives, such as employing bibliometrics to explore emerging trends, while prioritizing meta-analysis and systematic reviews for verifying intervention effects.

5.Characteristics of Review Papers

5.1 Criticality of various literature reviews

The rigor of a literature review is determined by the normative nature of the research design, the depth of data integration, and the reliability of the conclusions. The order of rigor for six common types is as follows: Systematic Review > Meta-analysis Review \approx Bibliometrics Review > Scoping Review > Rapid Review > Narrative Review. Systematic reviews are bench-marked against the PRISMA framework, ensuring comprehensiveness and reproducibility of evidence through transparent processes (e.g., two-person literature screening, multi-database searches, risk of bias assessment), and have become the “gold standard” for the integration of high-quality evidence in the fields of medicine and education. While meta-analyses rely on statistical models, such as effect size aggregation and heterogeneity testing, to enhance the objectivity of conclusions, their rigor is limited by the homogeneity and quality of the original studies. If the original data are biased, there is a risk of distortion, often summarized as “garbage in, garbage out.” Bibliometric reviews use tools like CiteSpace to

quantitatively explore disciplinary trends, which are objective and efficient in macro-dynamic analysis but struggle to deeply interpret the logical content of the literature. Scoping reviews, guided by the Arksey & O' Malley framework, are suitable for exploring emerging topics, but their descriptive goals and non-conclusive nature limit methodological depth. Rapid reviews compress processes for timeliness, such as simplified searches and single screenings, which can support decision-making in emergencies but at the cost of comprehensiveness. Narrative reviews rely entirely on the author's subjective synthesis, lacking standardized processes, and are the least rigorous but suitable for knowledge dissemination.

In summary, high-rigor methods (Systematic Review, Meta-analyses Review) are suitable for hypothesis testing and policy formulation, medium-rigor methods (Bibliometrics Review, Scoping Review) excel in trend exploration, while low-rigor methods (Rapid Review, Narrative Review) are more practical for time-sensitive needs or preliminary research. Researchers must balance the strength of evidence, resource constraints, and research objectives, avoiding the blind pursuit of methodological complexity to achieve a balance between scientific rigor and efficiency.

5.2 Comparison of the Characteristics of Various Literature Reviews

The methods of academic research are becoming increasingly diverse, and literature reviews are no longer mere "compilations of articles." Systematic reviews, meta-analyses reviews, scoping reviews, and bibliometric reviews each have their own characteristics and value. For undergraduates, choosing which type of review to conduct involves balancing academic rigor, technical simplicity, and the utility of research outcomes. Systematic reviews can provide highly reliable evidence, but they are time-consuming and demanding, making them impractical for undergraduates. Meta-analyses also require complex statistical skills. In contrast, bibliometric reviews use tools to process data, aligning with academic standards while being easy to execute, thus resolving the conflict between academic requirements and usability. A specific comparison is shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1 Characteristics of Various Literature Reviews (1)

Type	Methodology	Data Source	Analysis Approach
Bibliometric Review	Quantitative statistical and visual analysis based on literature databases	Large-scale literature databases (e.g., Web of Science, Scopus)	Quantitative (using statistical and visualization tools)
Meta-Analysis Review	Statistical synthesis of effect sizes from independent studies	Published quantitative research data (e.g., RCT results)	Quantitative (using statistical models)
Systematic Review	Comprehensive collection, evaluation, and synthesis of evidence following standardized procedures	Various types of literature (qualitative and quantitative research)	Qualitative or Quantitative (e.g., Meta-analysis)
Narrative Review	Summarization of field advancements based on the author's experience	Collection of literature without strict selection criteria	Qualitative (descriptive summary)
Scoping Review	Definition of the research field scope and conceptual framework	Extensive literature (including grey literature)	Qualitative (categorization and thematic analysis)
Rapid Review	Condensed systematic review process within a limited time-frame	Selected literature (usually prioritizing high-quality research)	Qualitative or Quantitative (simplified analysis)

Table 2 Characteristics of Various Literature Reviews (2)

Type	Advantage	Disadvantage	Application
Bibliometric Review	Provides a macro perspective, strong objectivity, and rapid identification of field dynamics	Lacks in-depth interpretation of literature content and relies on data quality and tool selection	Used for scientific policy-making, discipline evaluation, revealing discipline trends, research hotspots, and knowledge networks
Meta-analysis Review	Enhances statistical power and provides objectively universal conclusions	Requires high homogeneity in original research and carries a risk of publication bias	Used for verifying intervention effects and drug efficacy; applicable in fields requiring quantitative conclusions such as medicine and psychology
Systematic Review	Employs rigorous methodology, offers high transparency, and ensures strong evidence credibility	Is time-consuming, labor-intensive, and has high methodological requirements; may be limited by literature accessibility	Used in clinical decision-making and policy formulation; suitable for fields requiring high-quality evidence (such as medicine and education)
Narrative Review	Offers strong flexibility, is easy to understand, and can integrate multiple perspectives	Has high subjectivity, may overlook important literature, and lacks methodological standardization	Provides a field overview and facilitates knowledge dissemination; suitable for preliminary exploration of emerging or interdisciplinary fields
Scoping Review	Adapts flexibly to complex issues and rapidly delineates research boundaries	Does not provide in-depth conclusions and has lower methodological standardization	Used for exploring emerging fields and identifying research gaps; suitable for complex or highly heterogeneous research topics
Rapid Review	Is efficient, low cost, and meets timeliness requirements	Sacrifices comprehensiveness and has limited conclusion reliability	Provides urgent decision support (such as in public health crises and policy-making)

5.3 Comparison of the “Cost-effectiveness” of Various Literature Reviews

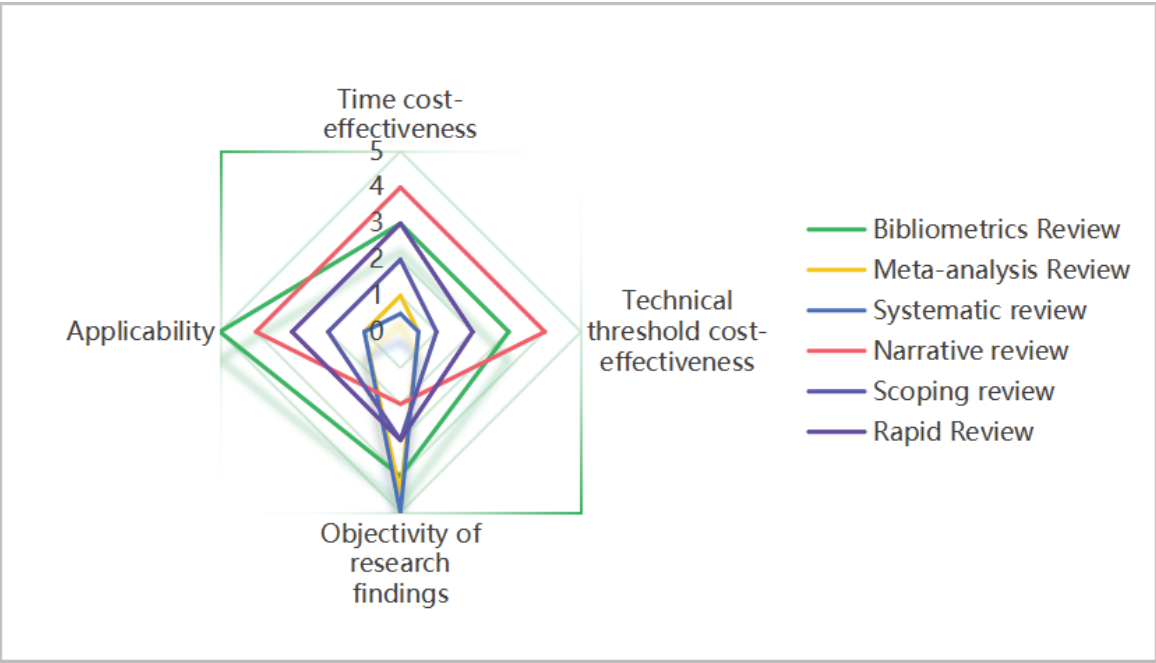
Compared to Systematic/Meta-analysis Review, Scoping Review, and Narrative Review, Bibliometric Review better meets the research training needs of undergraduates due to their “cost-effectiveness” advantage. At the operational level, it relies on standardized databases such as Web of Science and graphical tools like VOSviewer and CiteSpace, enabling data extraction and visualization analysis to be completed within 1-2 weeks. This process does not require mastering the PRISMA framework, R language coding, or complex statistical methods, significantly reducing time costs and technical barriers. In terms of output, data-driven conclusions like high-frequency keyword mapping and burst detection effectively avoid the subjective conjecture risks associated with Narrative Review. Additionally, the intuitive presentation of knowledge maps is more persuasive than the conceptual definitions found in Scoping Review. Crucially, this approach allows for the generation of objective conclusions through observable phenomena such as literature growth trends and author collaboration networks. It avoids the skepticism that arises from the lack of quality assessment in systematic reviews and alleviates the frustration undergraduates may feel due to insufficient domain knowledge. Compared to other types of reviews, it achieves a better balance between fault tolerance, output efficiency, and adherence to academic norms.

Table 3 Cost-Effectiveness Comparison Table for Various Literature Reviews

Types	Time Cost	Technical Thresh- old	Objectivity of Results	Applicability	Overall Cost-effec- tiveness
Bibliometric Review	★★☆☆☆ (Low)	★★☆☆☆ (Low)	★★★★☆ (High)	★★★★★ (Very Strong)	★★★★☆
Meta-analysis Review	★★★★☆ (High)	★★★★★ (Very High)	★★★★☆ (High)	★☆☆☆☆ (Very Weak)	★★☆☆☆
Systematic Re- view	★★★★★ (Very High)	★★★★★ (Very High)	★★★★★ (Very High)	★☆☆☆☆ (Very Weak)	★☆☆☆☆
Narrative Re- view	★☆☆☆☆ (Very Low)	★☆☆☆☆ (Very Low)	★★☆☆☆ (Low)	★★★★☆ (Strong)	★★★★☆
Scoping Review	★★★★☆ (Medium)	★★★★☆ (High)	★★★★☆ (Medium)	★★☆☆☆ (Weak)	★★☆☆☆
Rapid Review	★★☆☆☆ (Low)	★★☆☆☆ (Medium)	★★☆☆☆ (Medium)	★★☆☆☆ (Medium)	★★☆☆☆

Bibliometric Review, with its model of “technology as a tool, data supporting conclusions, and charts packaging results,” perfectly suits the research needs of undergraduates characterized by “short cycles, limited foundational knowledge, and baseline assurance.” It is the optimal solution that balances efficiency and rigor. In contrast, Systematic Review and Meta-analyse Review, which are “high-investment methods,” are more suitable for graduate students or full-time researchers to address deeper issues.

Figure 2 Radar Chart Comparing the Characteristics of Different Types of Literature Reviews



5.4 Comparative Analysis of the “Publishable Potential” of Different Literature Reviews from an Undergraduate Perspective

In undergraduate research, when publishing a paper is set as a goal, it is essential to balance “feasibility” and “academic value.” The type of literature review significantly influences the paper’s innovativeness, methodological rigor, and journal suitability. The core indicators of publishing potential include innovativeness, methodological reliability, and field suitability.

Innovativeness refers to the ability to reveal trends or gaps that have not been sufficiently explored. Methodological reliability involves adherence to the methodological standards of the target journal. Field suitability requires distinguishing the frontier level of the discipline. For instance, emerging fields (such as the ethics of artificial intelligence) are more likely to accept non-traditional review methods because research in these areas may not be as comprehensive.

Table 4 Comparison Table of the “Publishable Potential” of Different Types of Literature Reviews

Type	Publishable Potential	Innovativeness	Technical Threshold	Undergraduate Suitability	Recommended Priority
Bibliometric Review	★★★★☆	Revealing trends and knowledge networks	Low	Very Strong	★★★★★
Meta-analysis Review	★★★★☆	Quantifying the generalisability of findings	Very High	Very Weak	★☆☆☆☆
Systematic Review	★★★★★	High Quality Evidence Integration	Very High	Very Weak	★☆☆☆☆
Narrative Review	★★☆☆☆	Deep domain integration (requires authoritative authors)	Low	Strong	★★☆☆☆
Scoping Review	★★★★☆	Defining emerging field boundaries	Medium High	Medium	★★☆☆☆
Rapid Review	★★☆☆☆	Timeliness Evidence support	Medium	Medium	★★★☆☆

The advantages of publishing a bibliometric review are evident in three aspects: innovative exploration, methodological adaptability, and journal compatibility. Regarding topic selection, bibliometrics can swiftly identify the trajectory of hot topic shifts and core author networks in emerging fields, or uncover new interdisciplinary areas through the association of cross-disciplinary keywords. This aligns with the demand of specialized journals for novel perspectives and meets the thematic preferences of scientometrics columns in comprehensive journals. Methodologically, the reproducible analytical processes and visualized knowledge maps created using standardized tools such as VOSviewer and CiteSpace not only leverage the credibility of these tools to avoid methodological disputes but also transform complex conclusions into intuitive charts, effectively reducing the logical explanatory burden of narrative reviews. Additionally, the corresponding maps are aesthetically pleasing, increasing their likelihood of being favored by reviewers.

Barriers to undergraduate publication in other types of reviews

Table 5 Comparison of Publication Barriers for Literature Reviews Beyond Bibliometrics

Type	Publication Barriers
Systematic/Meta-Analysis	PRISMA/QUOROM statements must be strictly followed. Undergraduate students are likely to face rejection due to procedural flaws, such as search omissions or inadequate bias assessment.
Scoping Review	A clearly defined research scope and a high level of understanding of the field are required. Undergraduate students are often challenged for having an “incomplete conceptual framework.”
Rapid Review	Journals often regard these as having an “insufficient level of evidence,” making them suitable only for non-academic platforms like policy briefs. The publication threshold for policy reports relies on institutions or similar entities, which makes access difficult for undergraduate students.
Narrative Review	Top-tier journals (such as the “Nature Reviews” series) only accept commissioned articles from authoritative scholars. Undergraduate students’ work is often rejected for “lack of depth.”

Overall, Bibliometric Review is the only ‘cost-effective’ option for undergraduate students that simultaneously meets the requirements of low barriers to entry, methodological compliance, and journal acceptance. With precise topic selection, tool use, and journal appropriateness, undergraduates can complete a publication-compliant paper in 6-8 weeks and accumulate their first byline for their academic career. Systematic reviews/meta-analyses have higher theoretical publication potential, but their demanding methodological requirements far exceed the boundaries of undergraduates’ capabilities, leading to frustration and wasted resources.

6.The Practical Approach to Completing and Publishing a Bibliometric Literature Review Paper

The term “complete a bibliometric literature review paper” here refers not only to finishing the paper but also to achieving publication. Therefore, this practical approach must consider a more comprehensive and complex context and trade-offs than those in current research. This study surpasses previous research by innovatively incorporating undergraduate characteristics into the dimensions of consideration and designing a more reliable practical approach to completing a bibliometric literature review paper. Next, this study will demonstrate the entire process of argumentation and writing of a bibliometric literature review. The study is intended to be a literature review on psychological capital, titled “Hot Topics and Frontier Evolution in Psychological Capital Research: A Bibliometric Analysis.” Preparation phase: (1) Assess the researcher’s own research conditions (2) Obtain support from the advisor (3) Demonstrate the feasibility of the research topic. Writing phase: (1) Research methods and data collection (2) Introduction and literature review (3) Main literature and research strengths (4) Hot topics in the research field (5) Frontier evolution (6) Conclusion (7) Abstract and keywords.

6.1 Preparatory stage

The preparatory stage, although it does not involve the writing of the main body of the paper, determines whether a paper has the potential to be published. Established studies have tended to focus on the discourse of writing skills, but have consciously or unconsciously avoided factors other than writing skills. In fact, the preparatory stage sets the stage for whether an article will be published and transformed into an outcome that is recognised by the university’s evaluation system.

6.1.1 Assessment of own research conditions

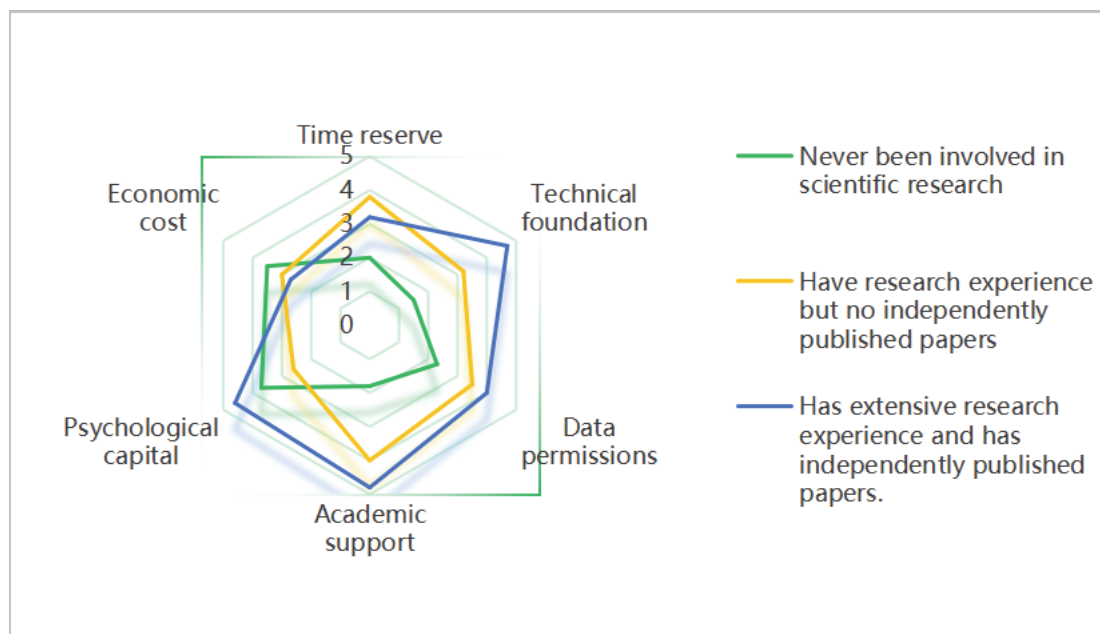
This study innovatively proposes the Undergraduate Research Conditions Self-Assessment Scale (URCSAS framework). The six dimensions of the URCSAS framework, including time reserve, technology base, data authority, academic support, psychological capital, and economic cost, achieve objectivity through quantifiable indicators and multi-source validation mechanisms, and their comprehensiveness is reflected in the logical design of internal and external condition coupling and dynamic system coverage. At the level of objectivity, each dimension is anchored to observable behaviors or resource entities. Time reserve is quantified by the average daily research duration and task completion cycle. Technical foundation is evaluated through proficiency in tool operation, such as the success rate of generating VOSviewer maps, and the reproducibility of experiments. Data access relies on hard indicators like the coverage rate of institutional subscription databases, including the completeness of literature acquisition from WoS/Scopus. Academic support is evidenced by explicit data such as the frequency of mentor guidance and the shared resource directory of the research group. Psychological capital is assessed through a dual-track approach, combining standard scales with behaviors in coping with rejection. Economic cost is objectively reflected in financial data, such as the proportion of literature acquisition costs and expenditures on editing services. These indicators help to some extent in avoiding subjective conjecture. The framework covers three major systems of scientific research activities: intrinsic motivation (psychological capital, technical foundation), external support (academic support, data access), and constraints (time reserves, economic costs). It includes both hard skills like tool operation and resource acquisition, as well as soft skills such as psychological resilience and time management. Furthermore, by examining the aspect of “economic costs,” it highlights the class differences in the allocation of research resources, a social element that is often overlooked.

Table 6 URCSAS framework

Evaluation Dimension	Evaluation Criteria	Self-assessment Score (1-5 points)
Time Reserve	Average daily hours dedicated to research (≥ 3 hours scores 5 points, ≤ 1 hour scores 1 point)	
Technical Foundation	Proficiency in using VOSviewer/CiteSpace; capability in utilizing reference management software (EndNote/Zotero)	
Data Access	Access to institutional databases (coverage of WoS/Scopus); reliability of VPN remote access	
Academic Support	Frequency of mentor guidance (≥ 1 face-to-face meeting per week scores 5 points, no regular guidance scores 1 point); extent of resource sharing within the research group	
Psychological Capital	Ability to handle stress (dealing with rejection/data anomalies); trait of delayed gratification (commitment to 8 weeks of continuous effort)	
Economic Cost	Capacity to afford document delivery/editing services; feasibility of attending academic conferences for feedback	

Although the URCSAS framework strives to ensure objectivity, many indicators remain difficult to quantify. To provide more accurate and visual references, this study involved conducting in-depth interviews with undergraduates who have extensive research experience and have published high-level papers as first authors. By thoroughly analyzing their journeys from initially engaging in research, to participating in project studies, and ultimately to independently publishing papers, three sequential radar charts illustrating undergraduate research conditions are presented for reference.

Figure 3 Radar Chart Comparing the Research Characteristics of Undergraduate Students at Different Stages



Analysis of the interviews and respondents' self-assessment data within the URCSAS framework reveals that the various indicators do not simply increase in line with the enhancement of research capabilities. Instead, they exhibit a complex and intersecting pattern. (For the sake of comparison, no contact with scientific research at all will be recorded as A; experience in scientific research but no independent publication will be recorded as B; rich experience in scientific research and independent publication will be recorded as C.) Analyzing the data reveals that: (1) In the areas of technical foundation, data access, and academic support, A, B, and C show a progressive increase. Specifically, in terms of technical foundation, B and C have engaged in research practice, honing and improving their research skills. Regarding data access, the high subscription

costs of international databases and journals mean that few universities can afford to purchase complete databases and journals. B and C almost inevitably encounter difficulties in obtaining necessary materials through conventional channels during their practice. Through various means, B and C naturally enhance their data access. In terms of academic support, as undergraduates' research capabilities increase (with C even practically reaching the level of a master's student), mentors are very willing to guide them in completing their papers. On one hand, the undergraduate does not require the mentor to spend excessive time on guidance, and on the other hand, the quality of their papers is likely to reach SCIE & SSCI levels, so mentors are very willing to increase their academic support. (2) In terms of psychological capital, A, B, and C experienced fluctuations, first decreasing and then increasing. The analysis suggests that A, having no understanding of academia, harbors unrealistic fantasies about themselves, thus possessing an inflated psychological capital index. B has participated in research projects but, due to the lack of recognized outcomes, their psychological capital has been continuously reduced, reaching a low point. C, with extensive research experience and having independently published papers, sees their psychological capital valuation return to a peak. (3) In terms of time reserves, B has the highest value, with C slightly reduced. This is because B's main task is solely research, lacking the ability to transcend research and achieve research outcomes transformation. Since C's achievements have been recognized by the university evaluation system, they are assigned other tasks related to research but beyond pure research. (4) Regarding economic costs, A, B, and C are generally balanced, with a slight decrease. This is mainly because undergraduates, as they delve deeper into research, tend to proactively purchase research tools.

6.1.2 Acquisition of Mentor Support

In the process of undergraduate students conducting bibliometric review research, the support of their supervisors has an irreplaceable empowering value, which is mainly reflected in the three aspects of academic direction calibration, research credit endorsement, and research funding support.^[12] Firstly, at the level of academic direction calibration, tutors can quickly identify the boundaries of academic value of the selected topic by virtue of their domain knowledge map and research experience. For example, when identifying the research topic of 'psychological capital', tutors can help undergraduates avoid the risk of 'insufficient innovation due to overheating' or 'insufficient data samples due to overcooling' by assessing the maturity of the literature in the field (e.g. trend of average annual publications, stability of the core group of authors), diagnosing the methodological suitability (e.g. completeness of WoS database), and analyzing the potential of disciplinary crossover (e.g. intensity of the correlation with management science and education science). This helps undergraduates to avoid the risk of 'insufficient innovation due to overheated topic' or 'insufficient data sample due to cold field'. This kind of professional judgement can significantly shorten the trial-and-error cycle of students' independent exploration, so that the research design can quickly enter the operable stage. Secondly, in terms of research credit endorsement, the academic status of the supervisor provides multiple guarantees for undergraduate research. When students submit manuscripts as first authors, the role certification of the mentor as corresponding author can effectively enhance the journal editorial board's recognition of the paper's methodological standardisation and the credibility of the conclusions. In particular, bibliometrics research usually involves complex data cleaning processes and tool parameter settings, and the mentor's signature is essentially a guarantee of the compliance of the research process. In addition, mentors can provide students with support for translating their results through academic networks, including recommendations to appropriate journal columns and referrals to reviewers in the field for pre-reviews, etc. These initiatives significantly lower the threshold for undergraduates to independently cope with the academic review system. Finally, at the level of research funding support, the publication of thesis is likely to require page charges, especially the high level foreign SCIE & SSCI journals often charge high page charges ranging from hundreds to thousands of US dollars, and the funding of the supervisor may become the key to whether the thesis can be published or not.

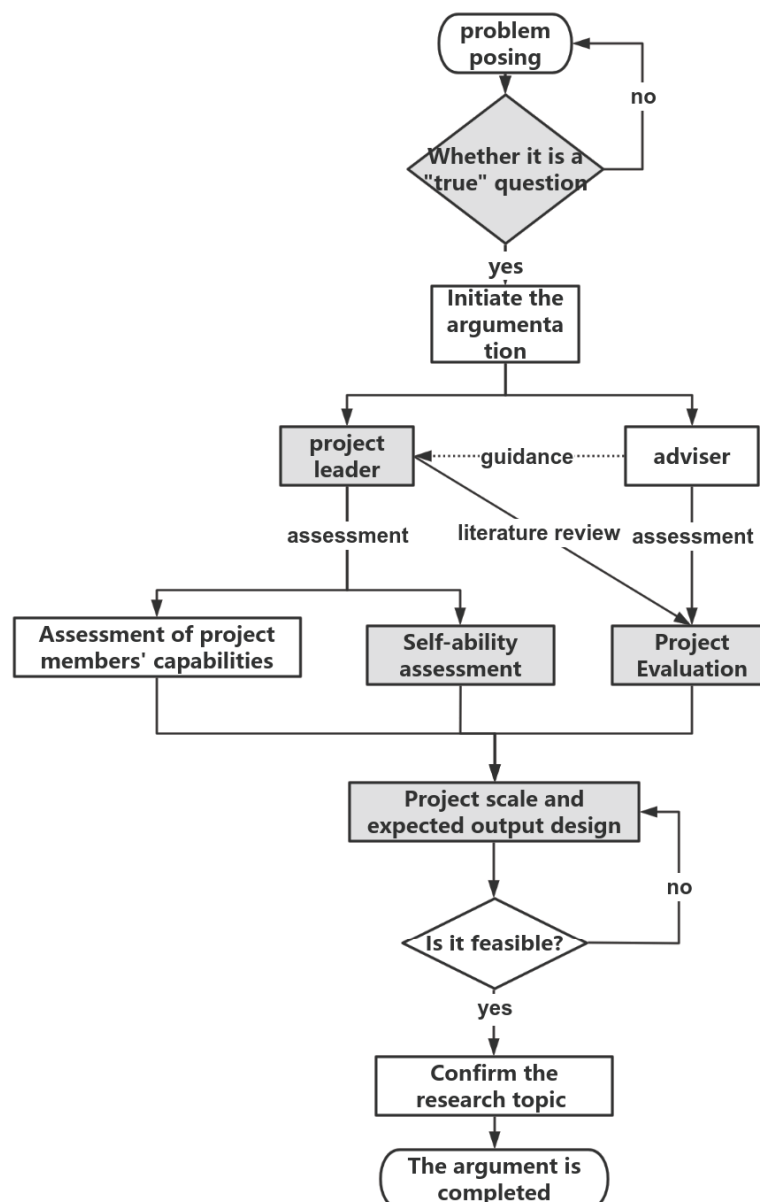
6.1.3 Feasibility Study of Topic Selection

The first stage is problem screening and core value confirmation. The primary task of topic evaluation is to distinguish the authenticity and academic value of the problem. Researchers need to determine whether the topic addresses key issues in the field that have not yet been fully explored.^[13] For instance, in the study of psychological capital, it's essential to assess whether there is a sufficient research gap concerning the "impact of generational differences on psychological capital." By conducting preliminary searches in core databases, researchers can initially ascertain whether the quantity and quality

of literature meet the analytical requirements, while also using knowledge mapping tools to examine the distribution characteristics of existing studies. This phase necessitates the joint involvement of researchers and supervisors: researchers are tasked with verifying the data foundation, while supervisors assess the theoretical value of the topic within an academic framework. Together, they work to eliminate research directions that lack substantive significance or are challenging to analyze quantitatively.

The second phase involves aligning capability assessment with research design. Once the value of the research topic is established, it is essential to systematically evaluate how well the team's capabilities match the research requirements. The project leader must assess the technical skills of team members in areas like literature processing and tool operation, such as their ability to proficiently complete literature screening and data extraction for the psychological capital scale. Researchers also need to self-evaluate their knowledge in applying interdisciplinary methods, such as integrating psychology and management perspectives. During this phase, the advisor focuses on examining how the research topic relates to core disciplinary issues, for example, whether the study of psychological capital aligns with the latest trends in organizational behavior. When capability gaps are identified, the research design should be promptly adjusted. If the team lacks proficiency in complex statistical tools, visual analysis can be prioritized as an alternative; if there is limited theoretical depth, the research scope should be narrowed to specific application scenarios.

Figure 4 Flowchart for Feasibility Demonstration of Selected Topics



The third phase involves research planning and flexible adjustments. The research process is divided into operational, phased tasks based on the team's actual capabilities. For example, the analysis of psychological capital literature can be divided into modules such as basic theoretical review, extraction of intergenerational dimensions, and summarization of intervention strategies. Each phase has clearly defined outcome nodes, such as completing a theoretical framework diagram or generating an intergenerational difference map. The research plan should allow for adjustments: if there is insufficient data on the psychological capital of a certain generational group (such as Generation Z), the focus can shift to the workplace stress dimension, which has more data support. If the progress of visual analysis exceeds expectations, additional extended research, such as cross-national comparisons, can be conducted. This dynamic planning approach ensures the achievement of core objectives while preventing overall research stagnation due to obstacles in a single aspect.

The fourth stage involves comprehensive decision-making and risk control. The final decision must integrate both academic value and practical feasibility. Academically, the advisor evaluates whether the chosen topic can reveal new phenomena or mechanisms based on the field's development patterns, such as whether generational differences in psychological capital reflect the profound impact of social changes. Operationally, the project leader assesses the rationality of the research cycle through time node deduction. If the evaluation is successful, a clear research plan is developed and a team is assembled; if there are significant flaws, the core problem awareness is retained, and the research method is adjusted or the application scenario is changed. For example, if the feasibility of generational research on psychological capital is insufficient, the focus can shift to analyzing the trajectory of psychological capital changes in individuals during career transitions, thereby maintaining core value while reducing implementation difficulty. This decision-making mechanism effectively controls research risks by balancing the pursuit of innovation with realistic conditions.

6.2 writing stage

The complete writing process consists of seven parts: research methods and data collection, introduction and literature review, main literature and research strengths, hot topics in the research field, frontier developments, conclusion, and abstract and keywords.

6.2.1 Description of Research Methods and Data Collection

High-quality data is essential for producing high-quality papers, and the design of scientifically rigorous research methods is crucial for collecting such data. This study recommends sourcing literature from the Web of Science Core Collection (WoSCC), a digital literature resource database that is widely recognized and accepted by scholars for its high quality. This database ensures the quality of the studies included. The primary focus of this study is psychological capital, encompassing its composition, design, and development. To ensure both comprehensive and targeted literature retrieval, this study employs a broad concept approach combined with manual screening. When the keyword "psychological capital" is used, related studies are manually screened. Furthermore, the time span is set from 2021 to 2025 (up to April 29), and the research discipline categories selected are Environmental Sciences, Public Environmental or Occupational Health, Nursing Management, or Psychology Multidisciplinary (the five fields with the largest number of publications).

Relying solely on retrieval and attention techniques may lead to research that appears relevant but is actually unrelated. To minimize the subjectivity of the screening process, this study referred to relevant review studies and established inclusion criteria, as shown in Table 1. These criteria consist of two parts: research content criteria and research quality criteria. The former ensures that the included literature has the basic structure of an academic paper and is closely related to the research topic, while the latter ensures that the included literature contains sound informational elements and has undergone double-blind peer review. Two authors meticulously screened the literature based on these standards. Any discrepancies during the screening process were resolved through discussion or consultation with a third party. Figure 5 is a PRISMA flowchart that visually summarizes the screening process of this study. The initial search yielded 1,891 articles, and 442 articles were selected after meeting the inclusion criteria listed in Table 7.

Table 7 Eligibility Criteria Table

Standard Type	Eligibility Criteria
Research Content Type	The literature must address a clearly defined research question, research methods, and research findings. This study primarily focuses on the core theme of psychological capital, emphasizing its mechanisms and nature rather than just its manifestations.
Research Quality Type	The literature must be at least three pages in length; reports or short papers under three pages are excluded. It should include all essential information elements, such as an abstract, author information, keywords, and a reference list. If these key elements are incomplete, the literature will be excluded. Literature that cannot be fully accessed, due to factors like retraction, will not be included. The literature must have undergone a rigorous and standardized double-blind peer review process. Works not subjected to such a review, like editorials or abstract introductions, will not be included.

Figure 5 PRISMA

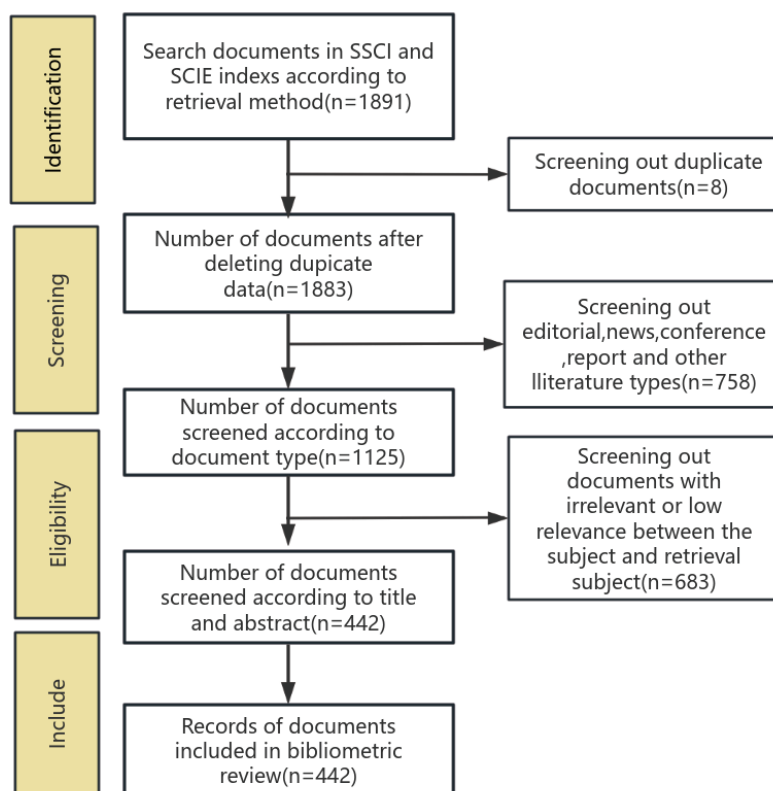


Table 8 Literature Search Table

Category	Specific Standard Requirements
Research database	Web of science core collection
Citation indexes	SSCI&SCIE
Search period	January 2021 to April 2025
Language	“English”
Searching keywords	TS= (“Psychological Capital”)
Subject categories	Environmental sciences or public Environmental or Occupational Health or Nursing Management or Psychology Multidisciplinary
Document types	“Articles”
Data extraction	Export with full records and cites references in plain text format
Sample size	442

After the data is collected, researchers can initially perform a qualitative and informal analysis of the field to grasp the overall landscape of “psychological capital” research. For instance, by examining the five fields with the highest number of publications, researchers can directly identify which disciplines are most popular for “psychological capital” research. By analyzing the author and country data from the sidebar, it is possible to roughly evaluate which countries have the strongest research capabilities. This directly lays the foundation for writing the introduction and literature review in the next stage.

6.2.2 Writing a Literature Review

The purpose of an introduction is to “lead”, yet many researchers new to scientific inquiry often turn the introduction into a replica of the abstract. Undergraduate students should use a “field-problem-method” funnel structure when writing introductions. This study presents the following fictional case analysis.

Case: “Psychological capital, as a key theory for measuring individual positive psychological resources, has been widely used to explain educational issues such as academic persistence and career adaptability since it was proposed by Luthans. Its four dimensions, including self-efficacy and hope, offer quantifiable assessment tools for mental health education in higher education institutions. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the integration of artificial intelligence technology into campuses, building psychological capital among college students faces new challenges: How can online learning sustain psychological resilience? How does human-machine collaboration influence self-efficacy cognition? Although existing research has accumulated numerous campus intervention cases, there are three main limitations: First, research predominantly focuses on traditional teaching scenarios, with insufficient dynamic monitoring of psychological capital in blended learning environments; second, interdisciplinary research accounts for less than 15%, and the collaborative innovation between education and information technology urgently needs strengthening; third, there is an imbalance in the proportion of regional studies, with sample coverage in central and western universities being less than 30%. Systematically organizing the knowledge map of this field through bibliometric methods can reveal the evolutionary paths of emerging themes such as crisis response and technology integration, providing an evidence base for constructing adaptive psychological support systems.”

Table 9 Table of Common Problems and Strategies for Introduction Writing

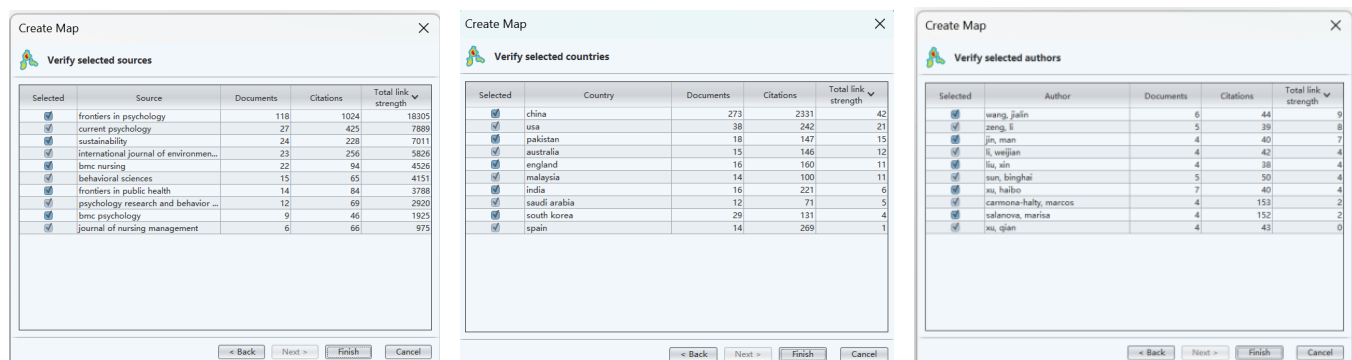
Writing Elements	Common Student Issues	Correction Strategies
Theoretical Tracing	Concepts are mentioned simply, lacking academic context	Original literature should be cited
Real-world Relevance	Theoretical discussions are disconnected from contemporary contexts	Assign tasks to create mind maps linking “Technology/Social Event → Theoretical Extension”
Gap Description	General critique of “insufficient research”	Require the use of a structured expression with “Issue 1:...; Issue 2:...” in three points
Methodological Argumentation	Simple statements of “using XX method”	Train with templates: “By using XX method, both problem A can be addressed and goal B can be achieved”

The literature review in this section is recommended to be a narrative review, which is time-consuming, technically less demanding, and, although not particularly rigorous, fits the undergraduate student’s own research profile and is the most cost-effective. Specifically, you can select highly cited or representative papers from the available data, and summarize and analyse their abstracts, so that you can complete the literature review section most efficiently. Subsequently, three research questions for this study need to be asked after the literature review: 1. What is the distribution of research power in the field of psychological capital research in the past five years? 2. What are the current hot research topics in psychological capital research? 3. What are the cutting-edge trends in psychological capital research?

6.2.3 Main Literature and Research Strength Analysis

The main indicators of research power include the number of publications and journals, core countries and teams. The number of publications and their fluctuations not only reflect the prosperity of a research field, but also reveal the development trend of the field at a macro level. Journals are important vehicles for disseminating the latest research results, and statistical analyses of the literature samples show that most research papers on psychological capital are published in psychology- and medicine-related journals. Among them, *Frontiers in Psychology* contributed a large number of research results, far exceeding other journals. Data from the study showed that China led the way in terms of the number of publications, with a total of 273, more than all other countries combined. It was closely followed by the United States (n=38), South Korea (n=29) and other regions. In terms of the number of citations, China topped the list with 2,331, compared to 242 for the United States and South Korea, respectively. It is worth noting that despite the huge volume of publications by Chinese scholars, their average number of citations did not decrease as a result, but rather exceeded the median (8.345), which suggests that the quality of Chinese scholars' research is somewhat guaranteed. In-depth analyses of psychological capital research were conducted with the aim of identifying representative scholars and core research strengths. Statistical analyses showed that there were 442 papers involving 1570 authors. Based on Price's law (Price, 1963), the minimum number of publications by core authors in the field of psychological capital was calculated to be 1.98 (nmax is the number of publications by the most prolific authors, which was derived from VOSviewer to be nmax=7, corresponding to Professor Xu Haibo). Accordingly, scholars who have published 2 or more research papers on psychological capital can be regarded as core authors, totaling 174. Price points out that the collective effort of research scholars is an important indicator of progress in a field of study. He argues that when an intricate network of collaboration is constructed between authors, groundbreaking research results are more likely to be produced and the focus of the field becomes clearer. Although several unique collaborative teams exist in the field of psychological capital research, close cooperation between these teams has not yet been fully realized. As a result, research in the field has tended to be limited to routine content, focusing on established practice. While this has ensured a degree of depth and quality of research, the lack of communication and collaboration between academic groups has prevented groundbreaking breakthroughs in the field.

Figure 6 VOSviewer-related Data (in terms of psychological capital)



6.2.4 Analysis of Hot Topics in Research Areas

The hot topic analysis of the research area requires the help of VOSviewer software. Based on the keyword co-occurrence network analysis, hot topics are differentiated according to colour blocks. In this process, keywords need to be de-emphasised. Literature keywords often have repetitions with the same meaning but with a difference in singular and plural, which need to be identified and removed manually. In addition, some keywords in the literature are invalid keywords that do not reflect valuable information and interfere with the presentation of the contribution network diagram, which need to be manually debugged continuously. For example, psychological capital as a theme word in the literature keyword frequency is very high, but can not reflect the research needs of the hot topic and interfere with the normal presentation of the hot topic, the keyword should be removed in the previous step of the network diagramming presentation.

Figure 7 Keyword Co-occurrence Graph without Data Optimization

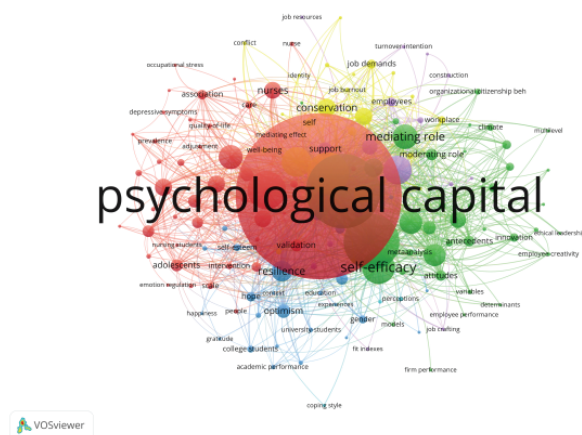
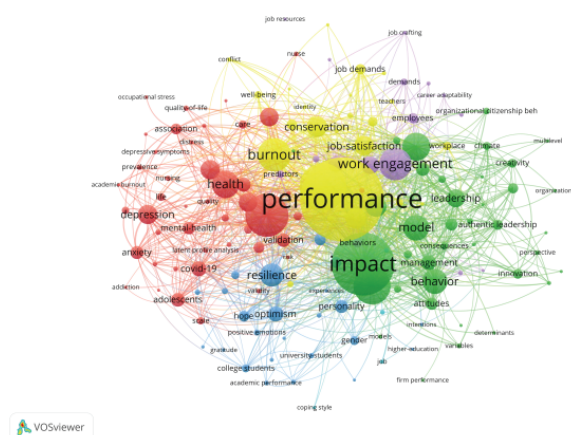


Figure 8 Keyword Co-occurrence Graph with Data Optimization



In the drawing process, a reasonable threshold should be set to ensure that the images are well visualized with keywords and hotpots. If the keyword occurrence threshold is too low, a large number of low-frequency keywords will interfere with the research; if the occurrence threshold is too high, it will result in too few keywords to be aggregated into a complete network. After the mapping is completed, the research hotpot topics are divided according to the colour blocks, while the list describes the frequency of the highest-frequency keywords appearing in each colour block with the frequency of the related keywords, as shown in the table below.

Table 10 Keyword Table

Hot Topics	Occurrences	Total Link Strength
Performance	151	Psychological capital(347) leadership (56) management (25)
Health	47	mental-health(22)anxiety (22)stress (36) burnout (58)
Work engagement	56	job-satisfaction (38)engagement (38)work (36)
Resilience	40	resilience(48)self-efficacy (56)optimism (6) social support (36)
Impact	112	COVID-19 (54) students (46) adolescents (23) attitudes (20)

6.2.5 Analysis of frontier evolution

The analysis of hot topics in the research field requires the help of CiteSpace software. First, duplicate documents are removed using CiteSpace's deduplication function. Then, the classification of publications for each year is obtained, and finally, a chronological map of research topics is created. Similar to the hot topic analysis, CiteSpace also needs to carry out de-weighting and propose invalid keywords to guarantee the high quality of the chronological map. After the mapping is completed, the research hot topics are divided according to the colour blocks, while the list describes the year in which each high-frequency keyword appeared and the frequency of related keywords to segment the evolution logic of the research on the topic of psychological capital, as shown in the figure below.

Figure 9 Timing Diagram of Keywords Without Data Optimization

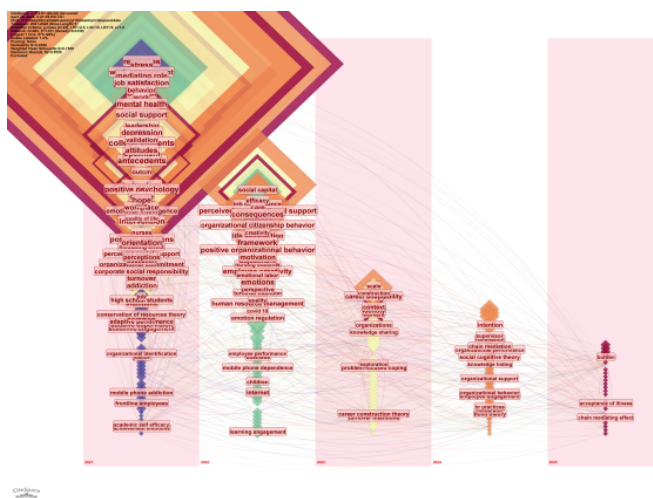
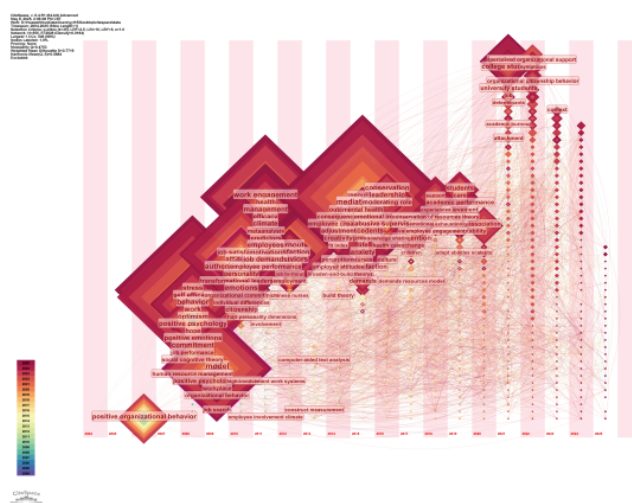


Figure 10 Timing Diagram of Keywords With Data Optimization



6.2.6 Writing the Conclusion

The conclusion is a targeted answer to the research question, which not only summarizes the main findings of the study, but also highlights the contribution of the study to the knowledge of the field. When writing the conclusion, the first task is to clearly list the research data, results, and arguments and answer the research questions posed at the outset point by point. Subsequently, the core significance of the study needs to be clearly stated to ensure that the reader understands the importance and practical value of the study. In addition, the conclusion section should also contain suggestions for future research directions, which not only demonstrates the researcher's forward thinking, but also provides a useful reference for other researchers.

6.2.7 Abstract and Keyword Refinement

The abstract is a highly condensed version of the whole review paper, and usually should contain four parts: background, methods, results, and conclusions. The abstract can be written according to the template, trying to be concise and clear.

Keywords can be selected according to the title.

Table 11 Abstract Writing Template Table

Dimension	Reference Template	Example
Background	(Field Name), as an interdisciplinary field of (Discipline A) and (Discipline B), encounters (specific challenges) within (social background), necessitating the achievement of (research objectives) through (methodology)	Psychological capital, as an interdisciplinary field of positive psychology and organizational behavior, is experiencing multidimensional expansion in both theoretical construction and practical application amidst the backdrop of digital transformation and frequent global crises.
Method	This study employs (specific method), utilizing tools such as (specific software) to systematically analyze (number) articles from the (year) core collection of (database name)	This study employs bibliometric methods, using tools such as CiteSpace and VOSviewer to systematically analyze 442 articles from the Web of Science core collection between 2021 and 2025.
Results	Presented in points according to problem specificity	“(1) Research strength demonstrates regional agglomeration characteristics...” “(2) Hot topics form five core clusters...” “(3) Research paradigms undergo three-stage transitions...”
Conclusion	Through (method), this study reveals (phenomenon), refining the explanatory boundaries of (Theory A) in (Scenario B) and providing (specific solution E) for (Practice Subject C) to address (Problem D)	This study systematically deconstructs the dynamic patterns of knowledge production in the field of psychological capital through bibliometric methods, offering evidence-based support for interdisciplinary theoretical integration and practical innovation.

7. Conclusion

This study constructed an academic training framework with pedagogical appropriateness by systematically analyzing the characteristics of undergraduate research and literature review methodology. It is found that: (1) undergraduates have significant stage characteristics in terms of cognitive load distribution, adaptability of technological tools and internalization of academic norms, and the six-dimensional assessment model of the URCSAS framework can effectively guide self-diagnosis of scientific research conditions; (2) among the seven types of literature reviews, including systematic reviews and meta-analyses, bibliometrics is the optimal choice for undergraduates’ scientific research training, by virtue of the support of standardized tools, the output of visual results, and the medium level of rigor; (3) the innovative design of the “literature review” methodology is the best choice for undergraduates’ scientific research training; The theoretical contribution of this study is reflected in three aspects: first, it breaks through the single skill training mode of traditional scientific research ability training and constructs a systematic solution; second, it incorporates publication feasibility into the selection criteria of undergraduate scientific research methodology, and proposes a three-dimensional evaluation system of ‘technical threshold - result visibility - journal matching’; third, the developed URCSAS self-assessment scale realizes the core pain points of scientific research through the innovative combination of quantitative indexes and dynamic radar charts; and third, it realizes the core pain points of scientific research focusing, method operation and results transformation. Thirdly, the URCSAS self-assessment scale is developed through the innovative combination of quantitative indexes and dynamic radar diagrams, which achieves the paradigm shift from subjective judgement to objective diagnosis in the assessment of scientific research conditions, and provides a reference and operable training paradigm for the cultivation of undergraduates’ scientific research ability.

Funding

1.This research is supported by the project ‘Path of Government Financial Input Restructuring to Promote High Quality Development of Education’ (Project No.2025279) of the Canal Cup Extracurricular Academic Science and Technology Fund for College Students of Zhejiang University of Technology and Key Project of Graduate Education Reform at Zhejiang University of Technology: “Research on Optimization Pathways for Integrating Zhejiang’s Red Culture into Graduate

Aesthetic Education in the Context of Comprehensive Ideological and Political Education” (Project No. 2024209)

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Reference

- [1] Li, L. (2025). From the triple helix to the integration of educational, scientific and technological talents: Higher education and innovative development. *Tsinghua Journal of Education*, 46(01), 30–39.
- [2] Yu, H., & Yan, P. (2024). The academic writing challenges of undergraduate students: An exploratory study at a Sino-Foreign university in China. In *English for academic purposes in the EMI context in Asia: XJTLU Impact* (pp. 15–43). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- [3] Donthu, N., Kumar, S., Mukherjee, D., et al. (2021). How to conduct a bibliometric analysis: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 133, 285–296.
- [4] Ma, D., & Wang, T. (2023). Avoidance of four misunderstandings of literature review in academic research. *Higher Education Forum*, (06), 106–108.
- [5] Li, Y., & Fu, J. (2024). Critical thinking expression and developmental characteristics in literature reviews: A study based on the social/cognitive genre model. *Journal of Zhengzhou University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 57(05), 124–129.
- [6] Liu, W., Huang, H., Saleem, A., et al. (2022). The effects of university students’ fragmented reading on cognitive development in the new media age: Evidence from Chinese higher education. *PeerJ*, 10, e13861.
- [7] Yaseen, H., Mohammad, A. S., Ashal, N., et al. (2025). The impact of adaptive learning technologies, personalized feedback, and interactive AI tools on student engagement: The moderating role of digital literacy. *Sustainability*, 17(3), 1133.
- [8] Yuan, R., Yang, M., & Mak, P. (2022). Undergraduates’ motivations to engage in extracurricular research: Evidence from Hong Kong. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 59(6), 679–689.
- [9] Moral-Muñoz, J. A., Herrera-Viedma, E., Santisteban-Espejo, A., et al. (2020). Software tools for conducting bibliometric analysis in science: An up-to-date review. *Profesional de la Información*, 29(1).
- [10] Paul, J., & Barari, M. (2022). Meta-analysis and traditional systematic literature reviews—What, why, when, where, and how? *Psychology & Marketing*, 39(6), 1099–1115.
- [11] Brignardello-Petersen, R., Santesso, N., & Guyatt, G. H. (2025). Systematic reviews of the literature: An introduction to current methods. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 194(2), 536–542.
- [12] Ren, J., & Li, X. (2024). Mentor support and postgraduate research ability: The role of research self-efficacy and academic atmosphere. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 1–15.
- [13] Adhikari, G. R. (2020). Strategies for selecting a research topic. *Mining Engineers’ Journal*, 22(1), 27–31.

From Ritual to Spectacle: Nomadic Wedding Dances and the Politics of Cultural Transformation in China

Manfang Lyu^{1*}, Hongjia Guo²

1.Tianjin College of Media and Arts, Tianjin, 301925, China

2.Tianjin Art Vocational College, Tianjin, 300181, China

*Corresponding author: Manfang Lyu, 1318918105@qq.com

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: This article offers a critical analysis of Mongolian and Kazakh wedding dances in contemporary China, treating these ritual performances not as vestiges of folk culture but as choreographed sites of semiotic labor, identity negotiation, and cultural regulation. Drawing on ethnographic case studies, movement analysis, and critical cultural theory, the study traces how kinship-centered ceremonies have been transformed into performative spectacles under the pressures of state-led heritage discourse, tourism economies, and visual nationalism.

Through a comparative reading of Ordos and Kazakh choreographies, the paper reveals how ritual sequences encode distinct logics of gender, kinship, and authority, while being repackaged for external legibility. Rather than expressing cultural continuity, these dances increasingly serve as instruments of aesthetic governance—legible, marketable, and politically managed. Concepts such as the aesthetic contract of recognition, ritual opacity, and choreographic authorship are mobilized to interrogate the shifting boundaries between embodied belief and curated display.

Engaging frameworks by Hall, Habermas, and de Certeau, the study shows that the modernization of wedding dance renders it both more visible and more vulnerable—visible to the nation, but estranged from community meaning. The article contributes to ongoing debates in performance studies, heritage politics, and affect theory by advocating for a more reflexive, community-centered approach to intangible cultural heritage—one that honors not only what can be shown, but what must be lived, misremembered, and remade.

Keywords: Intangible Heritage; Ethnic Performance; Semiotic Labor; Ritual Aestheticization; Cultural Politics in China

Published: Jun 4, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.382>

1.Introduction

In contemporary China, where ethnic identity is both curated and contested, the dancing body has become a key terrain of cultural inscription. Among the Ordos Mongolian and Kazakh communities, wedding dances—once intimate, kinship-bound rituals—are now routinely staged for audiences far beyond the family: tourists, cultural officials, heritage institutions, and television cameras. What appears to be tradition is often choreographed for visibility; what claims authenticity frequently reflects the aesthetics of recognition rather than ritual necessity.

This paper takes these dances seriously, not as vestiges of folk heritage, but as semiotic performances that organize relations, affect, and political legibility. Drawing on Stuart Hall's theory of representation (1997), we understand culture not as a

mirror of identity, but as a site where meaning is actively produced, circulated, and contested. Jürgen Habermas's account of the public sphere (1989) enables us to interrogate how wedding rituals—once embedded in private kinship logics—are refashioned into spectacles within the circuits of state discourse and market tourism. Meanwhile, Judith Butler's notion of performativity (1993) and Sara Ahmed's theory of affective economies (2004) guide our reading of the dancing body as both a surface of regulation and a medium of emotional labor. These frameworks are not analytical backdrops; they are conceptual engines for thinking the politics of movement.

Focusing on the Ordos and Kazakh communities is not simply a regional choice—it is a critical intervention. These two groups, while historically nomadic and culturally distinct, share a trajectory in which ritual practice has been transformed into performative heritage under the dual pressures of ethnic policy and cultural commercialization. Yet this transformation is uneven, contested, and full of symbolic ambiguity. As wedding dances migrate from yurts to national stages, they do not merely shift venues—they shift meaning, authority, and agency.

The chapters that follow trace this transformation through three analytic movements. First, we examine how kinship and hierarchy are embodied through ritualized gesture, showing how weddings choreograph not only family ties but social structures. Second, we interpret the symbolic codes embedded in movement and costume, asking how identity is rendered legible through aesthetic form. Third, we analyze how these dances are repackaged as staged heritage and consumable spectacle, arguing that preservation often entails a subtle violence—the recoding of belief into choreography, of belonging into display.

What emerges is a paradox: the more visible a tradition becomes, the more it risks dislocating from the very relations it once sustained. This study insists that cultural continuity cannot be measured by visibility alone, and that safeguarding heritage demands not only recognition, but a critical attention to the politics of who performs, for whom, and under what conditions.

2. Embodied Rituals and the Grammar of Nomadic Kinship

2.1 Ritual as Cultural Syntax: Choreographing Kinship through Movement

In nomadic communities such as the Ordos Mongolians and the Kazakhs, wedding ceremonies operate not merely as rites of passage, but as embodied cartographies of kinship and authority. Far from being festive embellishments or symbolic ornamentation, these choreographed sequences produce and regulate social order through disciplined movement. Gestures—bowing, unveiling, kneeling, circling—do not express culture; they enact its internal grammar, composing what Victor Turner (2017) might call the liminal scripts of social reproduction.

Figure 1: Tea Offering and Veiled Posture in an Ordos Wedding Ceremony

Source: Image captured by the author during fieldwork at a traditional Mongolian wedding in Ordos, Inner Mongolia. Used with the consent of local participants for academic research purposes.



Drawing on Stuart Hall's theory of cultural representation, we read these rituals not as reflections of tradition but as signifying systems that actively produce belonging (Hall, 2024). The dancing body is not neutral; it is encoded with social directionality and symbolic weight. As Judith Butler (1997) contends, identity does not precede performance—it is constituted through iterative acts of bodily citation, which, though seemingly natural, are governed by social norms and power structures. Thus, gestures in wedding rituals are not decorative but disciplinary inscriptions, choreographed to anchor the subject within relational hierarchies.

In the Ordos context, wedding rituals—often spanning three days and enacted across multiple domestic and ceremonial sites—begin with the bride's formal arrival at the groom's gate. This threshold, heavily ritualized, is not merely spatial but cosmological: it marks a passage from natal to affinal kinship, from private to public womanhood, and from familial intimacy to patriarchal incorporation. The bodily choreography that follows—bowing, gifting, veiling—functions as a script of submission and absorption, rendering the bride's body an interface of symbolic labor. The sequential unfolding—lamb presentation, tea offering, veil lifting—maps kinship relations through space and affect, reaffirming patrilineal continuity and collective memory (Cai, 2021).

The Kazakh Betashar ceremony—literally, “face unveiling”—performs similar affective and semiotic labor, though through distinct sonic and gestural codes. The akyn (poet-singer) invokes the groom's genealogy through sung verse, while the bride, veiled and mute, bows rhythmically to each named ancestor. This act of deference is not passive submission but, following Sara Ahmed (2004), a performative distribution of affect: emotions move through bodies, attach to signs, and materialize social obligation. The lifting of the veil, timed to the closure of the song, becomes a moment of ontological reordering—the bride becomes visible only when fully encoded into her husband's lineage.

These rituals are not static traditions, nor are they cultural fossils preserved against modernity. They are iterative choreographies, reconstituted under shifting political, economic, and familial conditions. Yet their formal coherence—the phases of approach, greeting, submission, blessing, and release—suggests what André Lepecki (2013) terms a choreopolitics of kinship: a politics enacted through movement, where the body is both the medium and the message of cultural inscription. Here, movement is not freedom but regulation, and dance is not celebration but structure.

In this sense, the nomadic wedding is not simply an occasion for joy—it is a pedagogical performance of order, wherein subjects are taught, through gesture, how to feel, where to stand, and whom to obey. It is a ritual where bodies become legible to their community, and where intimacy and governance intersect through movement.

Figure 2: Mounted Entry and Veiled Transition in a Kazakh Wedding Procession

Source: <https://www.wxrb.com/doc/2022/07/27/189301.shtml>



2.2 The Ritual Economy of Gender and Power

The gendered distribution of gestures within nomadic wedding rituals is not incidental. It is the very architecture through which social reproduction is naturalized. As Butler (2011) argues, gender is not a stable identity but a “stylized repetition of acts,” and within these rituals we witness precisely such repetition. In both Ordos and Kazakh traditions, the bride’s body is not her own—it is rendered a symbolic medium through which respect, continuity, and honor are displayed and exchanged. Her silence, her veiling, her kneeling, and her eventual unveiling are all choreographed enactments of deference and transformation.

In Ordos practice, the bride serves tea to the groom’s parents in a kneeling posture—an act that communicates gratitude but also institutionalizes a relational asymmetry. The tea, warm and fragrant, is less a refreshment than an epistemic device. It marks the bride as both guest and subject, someone whose bodily movement signals respect and surrender. Meanwhile, male kin on both sides perform toasting and lamb-slaughtering, enacting authority and sacrificial power. The gendered opposition—female offering, male initiation—mirrors a cosmology of power in which bodily gestures legitimate social order. Kazakh Betashar rituals reflect similar logics. Here, the bride’s repeated bows are publicly surveilled; each gesture of reverence is performed under the gaze of a singer who names the elders. The akyn becomes not only a narrator but a sovereign of movement, directing the bride’s body as she is symbolically absorbed into the husband’s clan. While some readings of the akyn role celebrate its performative artistry, a critical lens reveals it as a mediator of patriarchal transition—a voice that disciplines the bride into submission through poetic enumeration.

Moreover, these rituals encode not just gendered roles but gendered affect. The bride’s modesty and restraint are not only behavioral expectations but also affective ones. She must feel and perform submission—her tears at farewell, her bowed head at praise, her silence under the veil are all affective signs of propriety. In Ahmed’s terms, emotions here are not internal states but “cultural practices”—they “do things” (Ahmed, 2013). They bind the bride to her role and the audience to its legitimacy. The affective economy of the wedding thus underwrites the political economy of gender.

But while the rituals appear rigid, they are also sites of improvisation, tension, and even resistance. In Ordos weddings, some contemporary brides now choose to lift their own veil, to speak or sing during the tea offering. In urban Kazakh ceremonies, brides may forego the full Betashar ritual or have female akyns narrate a different genealogy. These small deviations, though seemingly minor, constitute what James Scott (1990) would call “infrapolitics”—the everyday acts through which subalterns negotiate authority without overt rebellion. They remind us that even in the most coded ritual, the body retains agency.

Table 1: Ritual Choreographies of Kinship, Gender, and Authority in Ordos and Kazakh Wedding Ceremonies

Ritual Phase	Ordos Mongolian	Kazakh (Betashar)
Threshold Crossing	Bride arrives at groom’s gate; ceremonial bow between families	Bride enters space veiled; awaits akyn’s invocation to begin her visible transition
Kinship Invocation	Blessings from elders, toasts, and symbolic offerings (sheep, tea, fire)	Akyn sings lineage; bride bows to each name; ritual of ancestral submission
Affective Discipline	Bride serves tea kneeling; red veil conceals facial affect	Bride maintains silence and modesty until veil is lifted by male narrator
Gendered Authority	Male kin toast and perform slaughter; female kin escort bride, control veil lifting	Male narrator directs ritual; bride responds through movement, not speech
Climactic Unveiling	Groom lifts veil; couple drinks tea from same cup (symbol of union and reciprocity)	Akyn unveils bride; coin and sweet shower mark fertility and social integration
Communal Release	Folk dances performed (e.g., chopsticks dance); community joins in rhythmic festivity	Female and male dances after Betashar; celebration of resilience and honor

2.3 Scoring Diversity

If we approach these wedding rituals not as folkloric residues but as structured ensembles of signification and power, a deeper epistemological function comes into view. Within nomadic cultures, wedding dances are not cultural relics—they are non-retroactive modalities of inscription: choreographic technologies that teach bodies how to belong, how to feel, and how to

signify kinship.

These performances do not express identity; they compose it. As Stuart Hall (2011) contends, identity is not a reflection of pre-given essence but a strategic articulation—a contingent linkage among social positions, affective investments, and institutional codes. In the Gramscian sense, these articulations stabilize difference into legible forms. Wedding rituals thus operate not as affirmations of cultural coherence, but as sites of discursive convergence, where gender, lineage, emotion, and sovereignty are synchronized into fleeting unity.

The dancing body, in this context, is not simply a medium but a temporal interface. It functions as both archive and mechanism: it stores the sedimented grammar of kinship, yet it also enacts its renewal under shifting material and symbolic regimes. This tension—between repetition and improvisation, submission and semiotic excess—is where the ritual derives its cultural productivity.

To read diversity here is not to celebrate variation or pluralism, but to trace how difference is choreographed, how power is scored into bodily technique. The wedding dance becomes a score—not for aesthetic pleasure—but for the regulated enactment of cultural legitimacy. It encodes what is allowed to appear, what must remain veiled, and what gestures are required to secure one's place within a community's moral and ontological map.

3.Symbolic Choreographies and the Semiotics of Identity

3.1 The Politics of Gesture: Reading Identity through the Dancing Body

In both Ordos Mongolian and Kazakh wedding traditions, dance is not simply a moment of festivity—it is a form of semiotic labor. Movements, formations, spatial orientations, and the use of props operate as signs within a broader system of cultural coding. These signs do not reflect identity as a pre-existing essence; rather, they produce identity performatively, embedding subjects into relations of kinship, gender, and collective memory through gesture.

Wedding dances, especially within post-nomadic and minority contexts, function as what Homi Bhabha (2012) might describe as pedagogical performances—ritualized stagings where ethnic identity is not only displayed but repeatedly disciplined into public legibility. These gestures are never neutral. They choreograph belonging and rehearse the politics of difference within asymmetric cultural and institutional gazes.

Take, for instance, the Ordos chopstick dance, performed with rhythmic percussive strikes—across the thighs, chest, and arms—by circular formations surrounding a brazier. While seemingly communal and festive, the dance encodes a corporeal historiography: its sonic repetition evokes pastoral labor, ancestral fortitude, and intergenerational rhythm. In this ritual repetition, we see not simply a celebration of cultural vitality, but a ritual re-signification of embodied memory—where wood on flesh reanimates the cosmology of survival.

Kazakh wedding choreography, by contrast, privileges a more hierarchical and gendered semiotics. In the Betashar, the bride's sustained bowed posture is not merely respectful—it is a codified performance of submission. The repeated bowing, directed by the akyn's invocation of the groom's genealogy, renders the bride's body a canvas of narrative inscription. Her movements are not self-determined but orchestrated by male voice, sanctioned by lineage, and authenticated through public observation. As Shilling (2012) argues, bodily practice is not incidental but foundational to the organization of social identity and symbolic distinction.

Yet this structure of regulation does not erase agency. As Brennan (2004) suggests, affect is not an interior possession but a transmissible force—it moves between bodies, becomes contagious, and organizes recognition. The bride's bowed head is not merely an index of emotion; it is a performative vector, a gesture that solicits response and circulates meaning. What matters is not whether she feels modest, but whether her posture becomes legible as modesty within the shared affective economy of the ritual.

Such readings challenge essentialist notions of wedding dance as a transparent expression of cultural authenticity. Instead, these rituals act as choreographic containers of symbolic order—structures through which identity is produced, regulated, and made intelligible. To dance the wedding is not to display who one is, but to demonstrate one's capacity to inhabit the codes—gesture, costume, rhythm, silence—that constitute social recognizability within both the community and the gaze of the state, the tourist, or the ethnographer.

3.2 Costume, Props, and the Semiotic Architecture of Cultural Display

The semiotic architecture of nomadic wedding dance extends far beyond gesture. Costume and props do not merely embellish the body—they amplify it. They serve as material semiotic devices, encoding cultural scripts into texture, color, movement, and sound. These are not accessories to performance, but infrastructures of meaning. In this logic, fabric becomes grammar, and objects become speech acts.

In Ordos weddings, red silk veils, silver-threaded robes, and ornate headpieces do not simply denote festivity; they articulate cosmologies. Red is not just auspicious—it is chthonic: tethered to fire, blood, and life force. The veil—worn until the moment of ceremonial unveiling—functions as a threshold device, both concealing and preparing the bride for her social rebirth. The act of unveiling by the groom is not romantic; it is juridical. It announces a shift in social visibility: the bride enters a new code of kinship intelligibility.

Props carry similarly coded intensity. The chopsticks in Ordos wedding dances, striking thigh, chest, and arm in percussive cadence, evoke ancestral labor—both pastoral and martial. The sticks are held at prescribed angles, becoming instruments of mnemonic rhythm, not mere musical tools. Likewise, the embroidered cloth passed between bride and female kin is not just an object of exchange, but a tactile archive: a carrier of generational memory, stitched affect, and social tethering (Liu, 2022). In Kazakh rituals, musical instruments—particularly the dombyra, a two-stringed lute—anchor the sonic spine of the ceremony. Its plucked rhythm structures collective movement and emotional tempo, orchestrating both harmony and submission. Among male performers, dombyra-accompanied mimicry of animal motion—rams, stallions—enacts a cosmology of strength, fertility, and tribal protection. For female dancers, slow, contained arm gestures, performed in heavily embroidered kamzol, materialize grace and regulated emotion. The fabric does not flow freely—it contains. It performs propriety.

These embodied and object-mediated codes do not express ethnicity; they construct it, in interaction with specific audiences and regimes of visibility. Props and costumes are choreographic notations in material form—stand-ins for gesture, condensation of ideology. They anchor identity not in essence, but in citational form: textile as trace, wood as metronome, silence as grammar. The logic is neither decorative nor folkloric. It is political.

Table2: Comparative Symbolism in Wedding Rituals — Material Culture and Affective Codes in Ordos and Kazakh Traditions

Symbolic Element	Ordos Mongolian Wedding	Kazakh Wedding (Betashar)
Red Veil (Bride)	Conceals bride’s face; lifted by groom as ritual of visibility, purification, and familial claim	Bride veiled until unveiled by akyn; marks transition from natal to affinal identity
Bowing/Kneeling	Performed by bride in tea-offering; signifies submission and gratitude to groom’s family	Bride bows to named ancestors as sung by akyn; encodes genealogical deference and public emotional labor
Chopstick Dance	Performed by kin and guests; striking limbs with sticks symbolizes labor, rhythm, and communal strength	N/A (no direct equivalent)
Tea Offering	Bride serves tea kneeling; enacts intergenerational respect and initiates integration	N/A; coins and sweets thrown post-unveiling serve as blessings (economic and affective surplus)
Dombyra Accompaniment	N/A	Central to wedding musical structure; shapes dancer’s tempo and frames performance as cultural ownership
Embroidered Cloth	Gifted by bride as symbolic link to maternal home; often handmade, tactile, and intimate	Less common; some brides wear embroidered kamzol, signifying honor and modesty
Circular Dance Formations	Guests encircle couple in final celebration, forming kinship ring and ecological metaphor (grassland harmony)	Group dances follow Betashar, emphasizing balance, gender roles, and clan unity

3.3 The Dancing Body as Interface: Between Internal Code and External Gaze

Wedding dances in nomadic contexts do not merely internalize cultural values—they also project them outward, toward increasingly fragmented audiences: elders and kin, yes, but also tourists, cultural officials, documentary cameras, and algorithms. These performances operate under a dual imperative: to feel authentic within the community and to appear authentic to the outside world. This tension produces what might be termed a semiotic compromise—a choreography that must be emotionally resonant for insiders while remaining visually legible within dominant regimes of heritage display.

Here, the dancing body functions as an interface between internal code and external gaze. As Erika Fischer-Lichte (2008) suggests, performance is never a closed loop between performer and ritual—it is co-constituted by its spectatorship. A bride's bodily comportment—how low she bows, how slowly she walks, how silently she veils—is read not only by kin but by cameras, cultural curators, and national discourses. Deviations from choreographic convention—such as interpolating balletic turns or accelerating rhythmic sequences—may be read as aesthetic contamination or ethnic betrayal.

Yet this highly codified space is not devoid of agency. Some brides choreograph hybrid routines that blend folk gestures with contemporary movement vocabularies; others intentionally slow or elongate ritual segments, injecting temporal friction into an otherwise rehearsed script. In touristic performances, dancers may exaggerate certain motions—not as parody, but as a form of affective labor that ensures cultural legibility and economic survival. As Deborah Wong (2004) argues in her study of ethnic performance, to perform for others is never simply to translate—it is to negotiate one's visibility under power.

Diana Taylor's (2025) concept of the "repertoire" offers a final analytic entry point: performance does not merely archive identity; it reanimates and reshapes it. In this view, wedding dances are not passive expressions of heritage, but dynamic technologies of becoming—ritualized yet revisable, coded yet porous. They tell stories not of what a people are, but of how they are continually being reassembled under—and sometimes in spite of—the gaze.

To interpret these wedding choreographies as expressions of cultural continuity is not incorrect, but it is insufficient. They are not merely expressions; they are machineries of signification, operating across generations to stage identity, negotiate recognition, and reconfigure what counts as belonging.

4. Heritage on Display — Globalization and the Aestheticization of Ritual

4.1 From Kinship Ritual to Spectacular Commodity: The Politics of Representation

The transformation of nomadic wedding dances in contemporary China cannot be understood apart from the political economy of cultural display. Once embedded in kinship temporality and spiritual cosmology, these rituals have been dislocated and reassembled into aesthetic commodities—circulating through theaters, festivals, and televised spectacles. Their displacement is not incidental. It is structurally induced by cultural policy, heritage economies, and the visual imperatives of nation branding.

A pivotal moment occurred in 1979, when the Ulan Muqir of Otog Banner adapted the traditional Ordos wedding into a stage performance—a symbolic inaugural move that marked the transition from familial ritual to choreographed representation. Since then, the wedding dance has increasingly operated within what Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2014) terms "heritage as metaculture"—a regime in which lived traditions are abstracted, aestheticized, and made legible to external regimes of value. In the Ordos context, the spectacularization reached its apex with the 2005 stage production *《Ordos Wedding》*, a ninety-minute dance drama that condensed a multi-day ritual into choreographic tableaux optimized for stage lighting and cinematic angles. The bride's red veil becomes a halo under spotlights; chopstick dances synchronize under strobe pulses. Kinship has been replaced by composition; mourning by *mise-en-scène*. The audience is not the family—it is the nation, the tourist, the cultural bureaucrat.

This aesthetic reframing is legitimized through the language of "intangible cultural heritage" (ICH), which purports to preserve endangered tradition but often repackages it for curated visibility. As Mumford (2016) argues, the commodification of culture under late capitalism transforms authenticity into spectacle, rendering communities as suppliers of sensorial experiences rather than autonomous bearers of tradition.

Kazakh wedding rituals, particularly the Betashar, follow a parallel arc. A rite once confined to familial intimacy is now rendered for broadcast: the *akyn's* genealogical chant is shortened or replaced with recorded audio; the bride's bowed posture

is choreographed for camera symmetry. What was once a ritual of submission is now an image of heritage—a performative proof of inclusion within the national imaginary.

This transition is not neutral. As Lauren Berlant (2006) notes, affective performance in public culture is not about freedom of expression but about legibility under power. The question is not merely what is shown, but who gets to define what counts as tradition. What gestures are considered “authentic”? What styles are marketable? Whose memory is choreographed, and whose is edited out?

These are not academic abstractions. They are questions of authorship, access, and agency. The transformation of wedding dance into heritage display demands that we attend not only to form and function, but to the politics of visibility—where identity is not preserved but produced, not expressed but curated for circulation.

4.2 Authenticity as Spectacle: Watching the Wedding, Forgetting the Ritual

The spectacle of the ethnic wedding rests on a powerful fantasy: that what is seen is real. However, as Rendall (1984) famously argued, the spectacle is not the real—it is that which conceals the processes of its own fabrication. What is seen in heritage festivals, televised rituals, and cultural diplomacy events is not the wedding but its image, formatted and polished for consumption as culture and endorsement as legitimacy.

This conversion of ritual into performance is governed by what might be called an aesthetic contract of recognition—a tacit agreement among performers, state institutions, and spectators that tradition must be beautiful, legible, and unthreatening. For the wedding dance to be valued, it must comply with visual conventions: choreographed for symmetry, timed for broadcast, cleansed of conflict, and rehearsed into affective smoothness. In this process, what disappears is not just spontaneity but ritual opacity—the pauses, tensions, and unspeakable residues that mark lived belief.

Rather than expressing feeling, these performances distribute affect through calibrated signs. As Sianne Ngai (2004) argues, contemporary aesthetics operates through pre-structured affective responses—the performance does not ask us to understand, but to feel on cue. A staged Betashar moves audiences not because they apprehend its ritual depth, but because its visual lexicon—golden embroidery, veiled humility, symmetrical formations—triggers affective recognizability. It is not fidelity to the ancestral that secures legitimacy, but perceptual fluency within dominant semiotic systems.

And thus, the irony deepens: the more performative the ritual, the more real it appears. This is what Jean Baudrillard would term “simulacral authenticity”—a copy untethered from origin, whose authority increases with repetition. Audiences are not deceived; they are complicit. They demand the “real,” but only if it conforms to the aesthetic code of the ethnic: vibrant, harmonious, joyful, and conveniently de-politicized.

The effects of this expectation echo back into community life. In many regions, wedding practices have bifurcated: a minimal familial rite for intimacy, and a maximal staged version for documentation and spectatorship. In Ordos, couples hire event consultants to engineer “authentic weddings”—complete with costume rentals, choreographers, and theatrical lighting. In Kazakh areas, Betashar can be outsourced to cultural troupes for display at banquets or hotels. Tradition becomes rentable; kinship becomes choreography.

Yet resistance persists—not as open defiance, but as what Michel de Certeau (1985) called “tactics”: creative deviations that work within dominant structures. Some elders insist on ancestral scripts, even when the akyn is a performer-for-hire. Brides embed private gestures that only close kin will understand. Certain communities restrict filming altogether, protecting ritual temporality from visual extraction. These interruptions reassert the wedding as lived time, not display time.

Still, the dominant logic holds: to be preserved, a tradition must be performable; to be performable, it must be aestheticized. And once aestheticized, it risks forgetting itself. The dance remains, but the grammar shifts—from lineage to lighting, from submission to spectacle, from communal cosmology to cultural commodity.

Conclusion

This study has traced the transformation of Mongolian and Kazakh wedding dances in China—from kinship-bound ceremonies to publicly staged performances embedded within the visual economy of multicultural nationalism. Once situated within the intimate chronologies of clan, cosmology, and emotional labor, these dances are now increasingly curated for heritage platforms, tourism circuits, and televised nation-building rituals.

Through the lens of semiotic labor, we have examined how gestures, costumes, props, and choreographies do not merely reflect identity but reproduce it under state-sanctioned frameworks of recognizability. Within the discursive apparatus of “intangible cultural heritage” (ICH), these ritual practices have been aestheticized into spectacles of ethnic legibility, aligning cultural visibility with national unity and market consumption.

In the Chinese context, where minority representation often oscillates between exotic celebration and political containment, the wedding dance becomes a choreographed symbol of loyalty—a visual narrative that upholds harmony while displacing the ritual’s original opacity, fluidity, and unpredictability. What was once a private rite of passage is now often staged for external audiences: tourists, government officials, UNESCO evaluators, and social media publics.

This process is not benign. The standardization of “ethnic tradition” within China’s heritage economy has created dual structures of ritual: one for kin, and one for the nation. In places like Ordos and Yili, families may now host parallel ceremonies—a minimal, affectively dense rite for relatives, and a spectacular, photogenic performance for institutional documentation. Cultural continuity is no longer anchored in ancestral time but increasingly brokered through staged authenticity.

Yet, as this study has shown, acts of refusal and improvisation persist: brides reclaim ancestral scripts; elders resist televisual format; communities reject the tourist version. These small tactics matter. They refuse to let ritual be reduced to choreography, or memory to *mise-en-scène*.

To safeguard intangible cultural heritage in China requires more than funding or recognition. It demands a politics of cultural transmission that centers community agency, protects ritual ambiguity, and allows room for imperfection, silence, and change. It means honoring not only the visible but the vulnerable—not only what can be performed, but what must be lived.

In the end, the wedding dance is not merely a symbol of ethnic continuity—it is a battleground of representation, affect, and historical authorship. What is at stake is not only how culture is remembered, but who is allowed to remember, and under what conditions.

Funding

no

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Reference

- [1] Turner, V., Abrahams, R., & Harris, A. (2017). *The ritual process: Structure and anti-structure*. Routledge.
- [2] Hall, S., Evans, J., & Nixon, S. (2024). *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices*. SAGE Publications.
- [3] Butler, J. (1997). *Excitable speech: A politics of the performative*. Routledge.
- [4] Cai, L. (2021). A study on the commonality between Kazakh and Mongolian dances under the grassland cultural background. *Art Evaluation*, (5), 11–13.
- [5] Ahmed, S. (2004). Affective economies. *Social Text*, 22(2), 117–139. https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-22-2_79
- [6] Lepecki, A., & Mayer, T. S. (2013). 9 variações sobre coisas e performance. *Urdimento: Revista de Estudos em Artes Cênicas*, 2(19), 93–99.
- [7] Butler, J. (2011). *Bodies that matter: On the discursive limits of sex*. Routledge.
- [8] Ahmed, S. (2013). *The cultural politics of emotion*. Routledge.
- [9] Scott, J. C. (1990). *Domination and the arts of resistance: Hidden transcripts*. Yale University Press.
- [10] Hall, S. (2011). Introduction: Who needs ‘identity’? In S. Hall & P. du Gay (Eds.), *Questions of cultural identity* (pp. 1–17). SAGE Publications Ltd.
- [11] Bhabha, H. K. (2012). *The location of culture*. Routledge.
- [12] Shilling, C. (2012). *The body and social theory* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- [13] Brennan, T. (2004). *The transmission of affect*. Cornell University Press.

- [14] Liu, X. (2022). *An introduction to dance anthropology* [in Chinese]. Shanghai Music Publishing House.
- [15] Fischer-Lichte, E., & Jain, S. (2008). *The transformative power of performance: A new aesthetics*. Routledge.
- [16] Wong, D. (2004). *Speak it louder: Asian Americans making music*. Routledge.
- [17] Taylor, D. (2025). From the archive and the repertoire. In H. Bial (Ed.), *The performance studies reader* (pp. 33–42). Routledge.
- [18] Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, B. (2014). Intangible heritage as metacultural production. *Museum International*, 66(1–4), 163–174. <https://doi.org/10.1111/muse.12031>
- [19] Mumford, L. (2016). *The culture of cities* (Vol. 19). Open Road Media.
- [20] Berlant, L. (2006). Cruel optimism. *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 17(3), 20–36. <https://doi.org/10.1215/10407391-2006-009>
- [21] Rendall, S. F. (1984). *The practice of everyday life* (by M. de Certeau, Trans.). University of California Press.
- [22] Ngai, S. (2004). *Ugly feelings*. Harvard University Press.
- [23] De Certeau, M. (1985). Practices of space. In E. Staiger, C. A. Mangham, & R. A. Solway (Eds.), *On signs* (pp. 122–145). Johns Hopkins University Press

The Impact of Cultural Identity on University Students' Career Identity: An Empirical Study Based on Psychology Education Curricula

Tingting Wang¹, Zhixing Yin^{2*}, Yanping Fu¹, Xiangfa Liu¹, Hongbing Li³

1. Weifang University of Science and Technology, Shandong, 262700, China

2. City University of Macau, Macau, 999078, China

3. Shandong Huayu University of Technology, Shandong, 253034, China

**Corresponding author: Zhixing Yin*

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: The relationship between cultural identity and career identity has emerged as a central topic in higher education, particularly within the field of psychology. This study investigates how cultural identity influences the development of university students' career identity through psychology education curricula. Drawing on a systematic review of existing literature, the study examines the interactions between these two constructs and the mediating role of psychology education. Results indicate that cultural identity significantly influences the formation of career identity via both cognitive and affective pathways. Furthermore, psychology courses that incorporate cultural elements effectively promote clarity in students' career goals and direction. The study emphasizes the importance for higher education institutions to integrate cultural identity education into curriculum design to enhance students' career development.

Keywords: Cultural Identity; Psychology Education Curricula; College Students' Career Identity; Mediating Role

Published: Jun 10, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.418>

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Cultural identity, referring to an individual's sense of belonging to a specific cultural group, holds a prominent position in psychology, particularly in higher education contexts. It influences not only academic achievement but also career decision-making and personal development (Tajfel, 1982)^[1]. In an increasingly globalized society, university students face growing exposure to cultural diversity, which profoundly shapes their academic and career trajectories. Career identity involves one's understanding and recognition of occupational roles, encompassing career goals, motivations, and behaviors (Super, 1990)^[2]. The intersection of these identities is especially salient in psychology, where students are required to engage in deep self-reflection and integrate personal cultural backgrounds with professional identities. This study aims to explore how cultural identity impacts career identity through psychology education, offering a novel theoretical framework for understanding the role of curriculum in fostering both forms of identity. While prior studies have addressed the influence of cultural identity on individual behavior and the significance of career identity in vocational development, research addressing their intersection, particularly within psychology education, remains limited. Existing literature has primarily examined cultural or career

identity as isolated constructs, with minimal focus on their interactive effects within educational settings. This study fills this gap by examining the specific mechanisms through which cultural identity influences career identity in psychology programs.

1.2 Research Questions

This study centers on the following core questions:

How does cultural identity influence university students' career identity, particularly within the context of psychology education?

How can psychology education curricula simultaneously foster cultural identity and strengthen career identity?

These questions underscore the novelty and significance of the research, aiming to bridge theoretical gaps and provide curricular guidance for higher education institutions.

2. Literature Review

The interaction between cultural identity and career identity carries significant theoretical and practical implications in higher education, particularly within psychology. This review systematically examines the current state of research on the influence of cultural identity on university students' career identity, with a specific focus on the mediating role of psychology education curricula.

Career identity formation is especially critical during higher education, as it is closely related to students' engagement in academic learning and directly impacts their future career adaptability and development potential (Qi, 2025)^[3]. For psychology students, the development of career identity presents unique challenges, as the discipline inherently demands deep understanding and reflection on both the self and others—thereby intensifying the interaction between cultural and career identities.

From a social cognitive perspective, Byars-Winston (2010) explored how cultural factors shape career expectations and behaviors. While this research laid a theoretical foundation for understanding the relationship between cultural identity and career development, it did not explicitly address the educational context^[4]. Specifically, little attention has been paid to how psychology education functions as a mediating mechanism in the co-development of these identities.

Psychology education curricula may serve as a vital bridge connecting cultural and career identities. First, cultural identity provides a cognitive framework for understanding the self and one's relationship with society, which in turn influences career values and goal setting (Leong & Serafica, 2001)^[5]. Second, cultural identity shapes emotional experiences and the need for belonging, both of which affect career choice and commitment (Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005)^[6]. Third, it also influences access to social networks and resources, thereby indirectly affecting career trajectories (Lent et al., 2000)^[7]. However, the concrete operations of these pathways within psychology education remain underexplored.

Despite existing progress in understanding the relationship between cultural and career identities, the literature lacks systematic investigation into how psychology curricula function as mediators in this dynamic. Most existing studies focus on cultural adaptation or vocational development theories without delving into the mechanisms through which cultural identity influences career identity within the framework of psychology education. This study addresses this gap by employing a literature review methodology to analyze how cultural identity affects students' career identity through psychology education, providing both theoretical insights and practical implications for curriculum development.

3. Methodology

This study employs the Literature Reference Method as the primary research approach. By systematically reviewing and analyzing relevant literature on cultural identity, career identity, and psychology education, the study investigates the mechanisms by which cultural identity influences university students' career identity—particularly the mediating role of psychology curricula. As a qualitative research strategy, the Literature Reference Method integrates and critically analyzes existing scholarly work to build a conceptual framework for understanding complex social phenomena (Hart, 2018)^[8].

This study reveals the mechanisms through which cultural identity influences university students' career identity and the mediating role of psychology education curricula. The findings are divided into four main sections: the definition of cultural and career identity, their relationship, the mediating role of psychology education, and an analysis of the influencing factors.

4. Definition of Cultural Identity and Career Identity

The literature analysis indicates that cultural identity is a multidimensional concept. Phinney and Ong (2007) define cultural identity as an individual's sense of belonging to a specific cultural group, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions^[9]. From the perspective of cultural adaptation, Berry (2005) views cultural identity as the process of self-positioning within a multicultural environment^[10]. Domestic scholars, emphasize the social constructivist nature of cultural identity, proposing that it is formed through interactions in social contexts and is influenced by cultural values and behavioral norms. Integrating these viewpoints, cultural identity is defined as an individual's sense of belonging, engagement, and value identification with a specific cultural group. It is a dynamic process influenced by both societal environment and personal experiences. In higher education, cultural identity not only affects students' academic experiences but also profoundly shapes their career development trajectories (Byars-Winston, 2010)^[11].

Career identity, as defined in this study, refers to an individual's understanding, recognition, and commitment to occupational roles, including career value identification, career competence perception, and career commitment. For psychology students, career identity is particularly complex, as psychology as a discipline requires not only mastery of professional knowledge and skills but also an in-depth understanding of the self and others. Thus, cultural factors play a more prominent role in the formation of career identity for psychology students (Ponterotto et al., 2015)^[12].

5. The Relationship between Cultural Identity and Career Identity

The literature analysis reveals a significant correlation between cultural identity and career identity. Gushue et al. (2006) found that positive cultural identity is positively correlated with career decision-making self-efficacy among minority college students ($r = .42, p < .01$)^[13].

5.1 Pathway Analysis

The literature analysis uncovers multiple pathways through which cultural identity influences career identity. First, the cognitive pathway is the most prominent mechanism. Leong and Serafica (2001) noted that cultural identity provides a cognitive framework for individuals to understand their relationships with society, directly influencing the establishment of career values and goals^[14]. Second, Zhang Wei et al. (2017) found in their qualitative study that a strong sense of cultural belonging provides emotional security, which makes students more resilient and persistent during their career exploration process^[15].

5.2 The Mediating Role of Psychology Education

The literature analysis demonstrates that psychology education has a unique role in integrating cultural identity and career identity. Pedersen (2000) pointed out that psychology, as a discipline, focuses on understanding cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes, offering students theoretical tools to understand their own cultural backgrounds^[16].

5.3 Empirical Evidence of the Mediating Role

Numerous studies provide empirical evidence for psychology education serving as a mediating variable. Domestic research by Zhang Ming et al. (2020) confirmed that the quality of psychology education moderates the relationship between cultural identity and career identity, with high-quality education enhancing the positive correlation between the two^[17].

The literature analysis identifies four key mechanisms through which psychology education facilitates the integration of cultural identity and career identity:

Knowledge Integration Mechanism: Multiple studies (Banks, 2015; Wang Hua, 2019) indicate that psychology curricula, by incorporating multicultural perspectives, help students integrate cultural identity with professional knowledge systems, thereby strengthening career value identification^[18]. The cultural integration of curriculum content is particularly important in promoting identity development, which aligns with Johnson (2019), who found a strong correlation between curriculum content dimensions and career value identification^[20].

Emotional Support Mechanism: Several qualitative studies have documented that students report feeling accepted and understood when courses affirm and respect diverse cultural backgrounds. This emotional experience fosters professional identity recognition and engagement.

Social Capital Construction Mechanism: Psychology education, by providing professional role models and networking opportunities within multicultural contexts, expands students' professional social networks and enhances their perceived

career competence. Specifically, the roles of mentors and role models have been repeatedly emphasized in multiple studies, demonstrating the importance of social learning in career identity development.

Practical Integration Mechanism: Johnson (2019) quantified the significant correlation ($r = .57$, $p < .01$) between practical activities and career identity, further supporting the importance of this mechanism^[20].

6. Analysis of Influencing Factors

The process through which cultural identity influences career identity is moderated by various individual differences.

6.1 Educational Environment Factors

The educational environment plays a key role in the integration of cultural and career identity. The degree of cultural integration in curriculum design directly impacts the effectiveness of this integration. Banks (2015) proposed a multicultural curriculum integration model that distinguishes four levels of integration: contribution-oriented, additive, transformative, and social action-oriented. Second, the cultural competence of instructors and their teaching methods significantly affect the integration process^[21].

6.2 Sociocultural Factors

Sociocultural stereotypes of specific professions also influence the integration of cultural and career identities. Based on the literature analysis, this study constructs a model of the “Cultural Identity - Psychology Education - Career Identity” mechanism. This model shows that cultural identity influences career identity formation through both cognitive and emotional pathways, while psychology education acts as an important mediating variable, promoting this process through knowledge integration, emotional support, social capital building, and practical integration. This model provides a theoretical framework for understanding the interaction between cultural and career identities and offers practical guidance for psychology education reform.

7. Discussion of Major Findings

7.1 The Relationship between Cultural Identity and Career Identity

This study’s literature analysis reveals a significant positive correlation between cultural identity and career identity. Cultural identity provides individuals with a cognitive framework for understanding the self and their relationship with society, which directly influences the establishment of career values and goals. This finding enriches existing literature by highlighting the emotional dimension of cultural identity, emphasizing the core role of emotional security in career identity development.

Furthermore, the study finds that cultural identity influences career identity formation through both cognitive and emotional pathways. By offering a sense of belonging and security, cultural identity enables individuals to navigate career decisions with greater resilience and persistence. This emotional component plays a pivotal role in shaping career commitment, especially in the early stages of career exploration.

7.2 The Mediating Role of Psychology Education Curricula

This study identifies four key mechanisms through which psychology education curricula mediate the relationship between cultural identity and career identity: knowledge integration, emotional support, social capital construction, and practical integration. These mechanisms provide a new theoretical framework for understanding how psychology education fosters the integration of cultural and career identities.

The practice integration mechanism is particularly significant. Several studies (Ponterotto et al., 2015; Wang Ming, 2022) confirm that student participation in culturally relevant practical activities significantly promotes the formation of career identity^{[12][22]}. This finding supports Ponterotto et al.’s (2015) proposed model of integrating culture into professional training^[12]. This study, through a systematic literature review, provides more comprehensive evidence, especially by integrating quantitative evidence from Johnson (2019), which links practical activities with career identity^[20].

Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of integrating multicultural perspectives into psychology curricula. The inclusion of diverse cultural viewpoints not only helps students develop cultural awareness but also strengthens their career-related values and goals. The study further suggests that psychology education should create supportive environments where students feel emotionally secure, enhancing their commitment to their professional development.

8. Theoretical Significance

Numerous studies (Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005; Zhang Wei et al., 2017) show that a sense of cultural belonging, by providing emotional security, influences career commitment^{[6][15]}. This mechanism offers new theoretical insights into how cultural factors affect career resilience. The study's findings contribute to the multicultural education theory by detailing how educational environments can facilitate the integration of cultural and career identities. It addresses gaps in existing literature regarding the specific mechanisms of educational processes, particularly the role of practical integration in this dynamic.

9. Practical Implications

The findings of this study have significant implications for psychology education practice. First, the results highlight the necessity of integrating cultural identity education into psychology curricula. Specifically, course content should extend beyond mainstream Western theories to incorporate multicultural perspectives and localized knowledge, helping students integrate cultural identity with professional knowledge systems. Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of providing professional role models and mentors from diverse cultural backgrounds. Universities can achieve this by implementing the following strategies:

Inviting psychologists from various cultural backgrounds to share their career development experiences.

Establishing mentorship systems that focus on cultural diversity, offering personalized guidance to students.

Creating alumni networks that connect professionals from diverse cultural backgrounds with current students.

These practical applications can help students better understand and integrate their cultural identities with their professional aspirations, thus enhancing their career development.

10. Limitations and Future Research Directions

Future research should further investigate the long-term effects of cultural and career identity integration on students' career outcomes, such as career adaptability and job satisfaction. Additionally, it is essential to explore how individual difference factors (e.g., personality traits, cognitive styles) moderate the relationship between cultural identity and career identity. Research on how digitalization and globalization influence the integration of cultural and career identities in educational contexts would also provide valuable insights. Lastly, developing and validating educational intervention programs aimed at promoting the integration of cultural and career identities would offer evidence-based support for higher education practices.

11. Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that psychology courses integrating cultural identity effectively contribute to the clarification of students' career goals and career direction. In particular, the integration of cultural content in the curriculum and the diversification of practical activities are crucial in promoting the development of career identity. These findings offer a new theoretical perspective on understanding the interaction between cultural identity and career identity, while also providing practical guidance for reforms in psychology education.

This study contributes new theoretical insights and evidence supporting the role of cultural identity in the development of career identity among university students, emphasizing the significance of cultural factors in career development. Additionally, it underscores the critical role of the educational environment in facilitating the integration of cultural and career identities. These findings not only enrich the interdisciplinary research on cultural and career identity but also provide valuable guidance for higher education practices, particularly in psychology education.

In summary, this study provides a fresh theoretical perspective and empirical support for understanding how cultural identity influences the development of career identity in university students through psychology education. It emphasizes the importance of cultural factors in career development and the key role of educational environments in promoting the integration of cultural and career identities. These insights are valuable for the continued development of higher education curricula and the support of students' career identity formation.

Funding

no

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Reference

- [1] Tajfel, H. (1982). Social psychology of intergroup relations. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 33, 1–39.
- [2] Super, D. E. (1990). A life-span, life-space approach to career development. In D. Brown & L. Brooks (Eds.), *Career choice and development: Applying contemporary theories to practice* (2nd ed., pp. 197–261). Jossey-Bass.
- [3] Qi Zhan Yong, Wang Yifei. The Formation Mechanism and Logical Reasoning of Social Recognition of Vocational Education Under the Influence of Cultural Traditions
- [4] Byars-Winston, A., Estrada, Y., Howard, C., Davis, D., & Zalapa, J. (2010). Influence of social cognitive and ethnic variables on academic goals of underrepresented students in science and engineering: A multiple-groups analysis. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 57(2), 205–218.
- [5] Leong, F. T. L., & Serafica, F. C. (2001). Cross-cultural perspective on Super's career development theory: Career maturity and cultural accommodation. In F. T. L. Leong & A. Barak (Eds.), *Contemporary models in vocational psychology: A volume in honor of Samuel H. Osipow* (pp. 167–205). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- [6] Fouad, N. A., & Byars-Winston, A. M. (2005). Cultural context of career choice: Meta-analysis of race/ethnicity differences. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 53(3), 224–239.
- [7] Lent, R. W., Brown, S. D., & Hackett, G. (2000). Contextual supports and barriers to career choice: A social cognitive analysis. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 47(1), 36–49.
- [8] Hart, C. (2018). *Doing a literature review: Releasing the research imagination* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- [9] Phinney, J. S., & Ong, A. D. (2007). Conceptualization and measurement of ethnic identity: Current status and future directions. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 54(3), 271–281. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.54.3.271>
- [10] Berry, J. W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29(6), 697–712.
- [11] Byars-Winston, A., Estrada, Y., Howard, C., Davis, D., & Zalapa, J. (2010). Influence of social cognitive and ethnic variables on academic goals of underrepresented students in science and engineering: A multiple-groups analysis. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 57(2), 205–218.
- [12] Ponterotto, J. G. (2015). Psychobiography training in psychology in North America. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*, 25(4), 317–329. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039152>
- [13] Gushue, G. V., Clarke, C. P., Pantzer, K. M., & Scanlan, K. R. L. (2006). Self-efficacy, perceptions of barriers, and career development in African American high school students. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 54(4), 307–317.
- [14] Leong, F. T. L., & Serafica, F. C. (2001). Cross-cultural perspective on Super's career development theory: Career maturity and cultural accommodation. In F. T. L. Leong & A. Barak (Eds.), *Contemporary models in vocational psychology: A volume in honor of Samuel H. Osipow* (pp. 167–205). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- [15] Zhang, W., Li, M., & Wang, H. (2017). Effects of cultural belonging on career exploration behavior: A qualitative study. *Psychological development and education*, 33(4), 467–475.
- [16] Pedersen, P. B. (2000). *A handbook for developing multicultural awareness* (3rd ed.). American Counseling Association.
- [17] Zhang Ming (2020). A Study on the Integration Model of Cultural and Professional Identity among Ethnic Minority College Students. *Research on Ethnic Education*, 31(3), 123–130.
- [18] Banks, J. A. (2015). *Cultural diversity and education: Foundations, curriculum, and teaching* (6th ed.). Pearson.
- [19] Wang Hua. (2019). Cultural identity integration in psychology curriculum: implications for professional identity. *Psychology and Educational Research*, 34(2), 45–58.
- [20] Johnson, C. S. (2019). Identity placement in social justice issues through a creative writing curriculum. Hamline University. Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/context/hse_cp/article/1675/viewcontent/Johnson__Tamara_Ch_1_4.pdf
- [21] Banks, J. A. (2015). *Cultural diversity and education: Foundations, curriculum, and teaching* (6th ed.). Pearson Education
- [22] Wang, Ming (2022). The impact of culturally relevant practices on the professional identity of psychology students. *Higher Education Research*, 43(1), 112–120.

The Impact of Modern Consumerism vs. Taoist “Wu Wei” Wisdom on Individual Happiness

Xiaofang Gong*

General Education Center, Qinghai Institute of Technology, Xining, 810800, China

**Corresponding author: Gong Xiaofang, 18997269865@163.com*

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: This study explores in details the profound and long-lasting impact of modern consumerism on individual happiness, contrasting it with the ancient Taoist view of “Wu Wei” (无为), or “effortless actions” and the ultimate wisdom of emptiness. By applying a multidisciplinary study method, this research draws upon psychological theories of well-being, philosophical interpretations of ancient Taoist wisdom and sociological analyses of the widely accepted modern consumer culture. The methodology involves a comparative and detailed analysis of the underlying tenets and practical implications of both consumerism and “Wu Wei”. The main idea is that modern consumer culture, driven by the constant and compulsive pursuit of insatiable desire of acquiring more material things and external validation, often undoubtedly leads to a paradoxical state of chronic anxiety and dissatisfaction that is hard to discern, despite its alluring promise of happiness. In contrast, Taoist “Wu Wei” emphasizes seeking for inner peace, contentment with simple lifestyle, and the harmonious coexistence with both the outside world and oneself by gently embracing the concepts of emptiness, being in a flow state and the absence of man-made desires. Key findings indicate that an excessive focus on material and consumption to stimulate different human senses can erode intrinsic motivation, foster abnormal social comparison and unconscious and uncontrollable obsession with the overwhelming pursuit of external gratification, ultimately diminishing genuine happiness that comes from within. Conversely, practicing the wisdom of “Wu Wei”, such as truly living in the present moment, fully being aware of the negative impacts brought by over-consumption, and detaching from the insatiable desires for obtaining more materialistic things from the outside world, provides the feasible blueprint for modern people to taste the real happiness from within. The significance of the study lies in its timely contribution to comprehending the growing yet overlooked challenges of modern consumerism and proposing an alternative paradigm for achieving genuine individual happiness. By calling attention to the limitations of consumerism and reviving the timeless wisdom of Taoist philosophy, this study provides individuals with valuable implications for enjoying a more fulfilling existence with greater contentment, and for further societal discussions on sustainable life and mental well-being in an increasingly consumer-driven world.

Keywords: Consumerism; Taoist “Wu Wei” (无为); Individual Happiness; Materialism; Existential Fulfillment

Published: Jun 16, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.421>

1.Introduction

1.1 Research Background and Importance

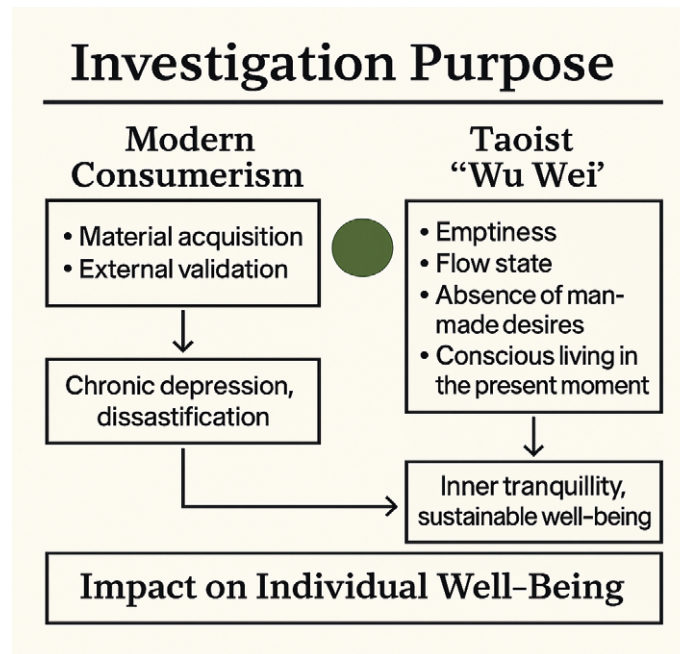
The pervasive influence of modern consumerism has changed the functional rules of societies globally, emphasizing the

accumulation of material possessions and services as the main and only portal to happiness and ultimate life satisfaction. This cultural paradigm, often supported by sophisticated marketing strategies, has led to a widely accepted belief that increased consumption equates to enhanced well-being^[1]. Yet, abundant empirical evidence and more and more academic research and study results challenge this premise, frequently revealing a paradoxical outcome, which shows that the relentless pursuit or accumulation of material wealth is often associated with increased anxiety, inexplicable sense of dissatisfaction, and a decline in genuine happiness^[2]. This dilemma bothering nearly each individual who lives the so-called modern life underscores an urgent need to explore and design alternative philosophical frameworks that can provide more stable, sustainable and true-to-life routes to achieve ultimate individual contentment, moving beyond the ephemeral and superficial instant gratification fostered by consumerism. In sharp contrast to the outward-looking concentration on consumerism, ancient Taoist philosophy offers valuable perspectives about finding the ultimate truth of life and maintaining sustainable happiness, particularly through the view of “Wu Wei”(无为). “Wu Wei,” often understood as “effortless action” or “non-doing,” advocates for a natural, spontaneous and harmonious interaction with the ideal world that arises from inner tranquility and alignment with natural rhythms^[3]. This concept is totally different from the consumerism’s emphasis on external acquisition and absolute control, showing that true contentment can only stem from detachment from desires and an acceptance of simplicity. Conversely, failure to adopt this life approach risks perpetuating a Sisyphean cycle of incessant desire fulfillment, an endeavor analogous to a futile, self-defeating pursuit. While modern society often preaches incessant striving and acquisition, Taoist principles emphasize cultivating an internal state of peace and allowing things to unfold naturally by following the unseen rules of “Tao”, fostering a deeper sense of fulfillment from different dimensions, but not tied to mere material gain^[4]. The main purpose of this study is to bridge this conceptual divide by carrying out a comprehensive comparative analysis between modern consumerism and the ancient Taoist wisdom of “Wu Wei.” By exploring their core tenets and practical implications for individual happiness, this study intends to illustrate the inherent constraints of a purely existence driven by fulfilling material desires and reintroduce the timeless guidance of Taoist philosophy. Understanding these two contrasting approaches is significant for individuals to maintain mental balance under daily pressure and learn to gracefully navigate the complexities of modern life. This study will help individuals discover a different inner world that is far beyond expansive and inclusive than the world created by fulfilling material desires. And once found can help alleviate pressure and depression that are constantly faced by modern individuals who work and live by following strict schedules. People will start to learn to cultivate the consciousness to live like human beings instead of machines. Thus, offering valuable wisdom for fostering genuine well-being and inspiring broader societal discussions on sustainable living in an increasingly materialistic world.

1.2 Research Objectives

This study intends to resolve the compelling dichotomy between modern consumerism and Taoist “Wu Wei” concerning individual well-being. The comparison of the fundamental tenets of modern consumerism, which puts great emphasis on material acquisition and external validation, with those of Taoist “Wu Wei” philosophy, characterized by aspiring to instill wisdom from the crude simplicity, achieving inner tranquility, and obtaining the ultimate liberation from the worldly bundles of mindlessly chasing all kinds of material things that does not necessary to the existence of human beings. Besides, the key Taoist “Wu Wei” principles, including the concept of emptiness, flow state, absence of man-made desires, and conscious living in the present moment will be elucidated to demonstrate their practical applicability in cultivating genuine individual happiness, to provide clear and down-to-earth guidance for individuals seeking to see the truth of life through the colorful lens of illusions created by modern consumerism and smoothly pass through the challenges of modern life full of all kinds of temptations that drive human beings to squander their lives to chase unnecessary surplus material things in their lives, offering a paradigm shift from materialistic pursuits towards a more fulfilling existence deeply rooted in inner balance and contentment, and to contribute to broader societal discussions on sustainable living and mental well-being in an increasingly consumer-driven world, by highlighting the limitations of consumerism and championing the timeless wisdom of Taoist philosophy as a viable alternative for enhanced individual and collective happiness.

Figure 1:



2. Literature Review

2.1 The Landscape of Modern Consumerism

2.1.1 Definition and Evolution of Modern Consumerism

Modern consumerism is a social and economic system promoting the ever-increasing acquisition of goods and services^[5]. It extends beyond mere commerce, shaping cultural values, societal norms, and individual identities, often equating material wealth with success and happiness^[6]. Unlike basic consumption, modern consumerism thrives on insatiable, often manufactured demand for new products, driven by sophisticated marketing and the constant pursuit of novelty^[7]. Historically, its roots lie in the Industrial Revolution (18th-19th centuries), which boosted production and necessitated consumer demand^[8]. Mass production and early advertising laid the groundwork for a consumer society^[9]. The 20th century, particularly post-WWII, saw its rapid acceleration. Economic booms, technological advances, and mass media expanded markets^[10]. Credit systems, department stores, and advertising normalized continuous purchasing^[11]. Thinkers like Galbraith (1958) noted how societies, having mastered production, then focused on creating demand^[12]. The digital revolution and globalization in the late 20th and early 21st centuries further expanded consumerism, with e-commerce and social media breaking down geographical barriers and making aspirational lifestyles globally accessible^[13].

2.1.2 Psychological Drivers

The tireless chase of consumption in modern society is significantly driven by a complex interplay of psychological factors. Status seeking is the most obvious motivator, where individuals acquire goods to display their social image and achieve perceived superiority^[14]. Thorstein Veblen's concept of "conspicuous consumption" highlighted how the purchase of expensive items purposefully serves to show wealth and status^[15]. Furthermore, consumer goods play a crucial role in creating specific identities, with individuals using material possessions with high price and famous brand to express who they are or who they aspire to be^[16]. The brands and products we choose can speak for us and silently but directly express our life values, personal interests, and social affiliations."

2.2 The Wisdom of Taoist "Wu Wei"

2.2.1 Introduction to Taoist Philosophy

Taoism, a profound and influential philosophical tradition originating in ancient China, concentrates on achieving inner balance, harmonious relationship between man and nature, and the balanced development both in the individual inner world and in the outside world^[17]. Unlike many Western philosophical systems that often put great emphasis on the human

dominance over nature or exaggerates the binding effect of a rigid set of moral codes, Taoism wisely inspire modern people to live by following the invisible principle of the Tao (道)—the ineffable, underlying force that governs the universe. The Tao is understood as the natural law, a cosmic flow that imbues all existence with its rhythm and intelligence^[18]. Key texts such as the *Dao De Jing* (attributed to Laozi) and the *Zhuangzi* advocates a philosophy that champions simplicity, spontaneity, and a deep reverence for the interconnections of all things. And by following this silent and invisible but the most powerful force in the universe, human being can achieve the greatest achievement by using the least efforts^[19]. In essence, Taoist ideas and concepts motivates individuals to see beyond the surface and aspires to find the ultimate truth buried behind all kinds of illusions, including the illusions of time, space and concrete things, and get free from the fixed thinking pattern of duality that drags the consciousness into extremes^[20]. This emphasis on naturalness and effortless living sets the stage for understanding one of its most central and often misunderstood concepts: Wu Wei.

2.2.2 Defining “Wu Wei”

The concept of Wu Wei (无为) is arguably the foundation of Taoist practice and wisdom. While often literally translated as “non-action” or “non-doing,” such translations can be misleading, implying aimless or passive actions. A more comprehensive understanding reveals Wu Wei as effortless action, spontaneous alignment, and non-contention [21]. It does not necessarily mean that as human beings, we should stay put and just pray for some outside force to rescue us or refrain from applying conscious actions toward our purposes, but rather, it leads and inspires us to use our sixth sense or the sense that usually fail to notice its existence to get connected with the power of Tao to live naturally and abundantly. This feeling of abundance achieved by tuning into the same vibrating frequency with the Tao is the ultimate happiness. After merging into one with the Tao, human beings can easily discern the natural course of events, without forced effort, resistance, or egoic manipulation. Wu Wei is also characterized by actions that are effective precisely because they are not forced; they arise from a deep understanding of the situation and a harmonious integration with the Tao.

2.2.3 “Wu Wei” vs. Desire and Striving

The Taoist philosophy of Wu Wei stands in sharp philosophical contrast to the incessant striving often associated with modern life and consumerism. Contemporary Western societies frequently promote a paradigm where success is measured by constant acquisition, competitive advancement, and the relentless pursuit of externally defined goals^[22]. According to the prevailing cultural narrative under the current consumerism, happiness is, taken for granted, predicted on the satisfaction of all kinds of desires, including occupational prestige, validation from the society, and material acquisitions. This narrative thereby creates the cycle of desire, acquisition, and subsequent desires of wanting more. Such a desire-driven endeavor frequently leads to heightened anxiety, psychological fatigue, and a boredom that often accompanies unfulfilled craving. And since the total fulfillment of one desire merely or inevitably gives rise to another pursuit, a perpetual sense of inadequacy and the persistent sense of boredom will emerge. In contrast, the Taoist view of Wu Wei offers an escape out of this struggling against the ceaseless pursuit and proposes that to live life by following the natural order to gain the genuine fulfillment is preferable, but not to live life by accumulating endless and unnecessary resources or try to get validation by contending with the external reality. The study aims to prove that by yielding to the natural course of the phenomena and acting without contrived effort will actually realize genuine happiness^[24]. While modern striving is characterized by effort, ambition, and a focus on future outcomes, Wu Wei emphasizes effortlessness, humility, and presence. It is a state of being where actions arise spontaneously and appropriately, much like the skillful actions of an unburdened mind, rather than those driven by a restless ego or endless wants^[25]. The stark contrast underscores two basically divergent paradigms of human flourishing: the modern consumerism, oriented toward asserting dominance and exerting total control, which frequently leads to intro-psychic and interpersonal conflicts; And the Taoist wisdom, which seeks to achieve harmonious state and adaptive flow, will eventually engender genuine peace, authentic tranquility, and infectious action that arises from alignment with the flow^[26].

3.Comparative Analysis: Consumerism vs. “Wu Wei”

3.1 Fundamental Differences in Approach to Happiness

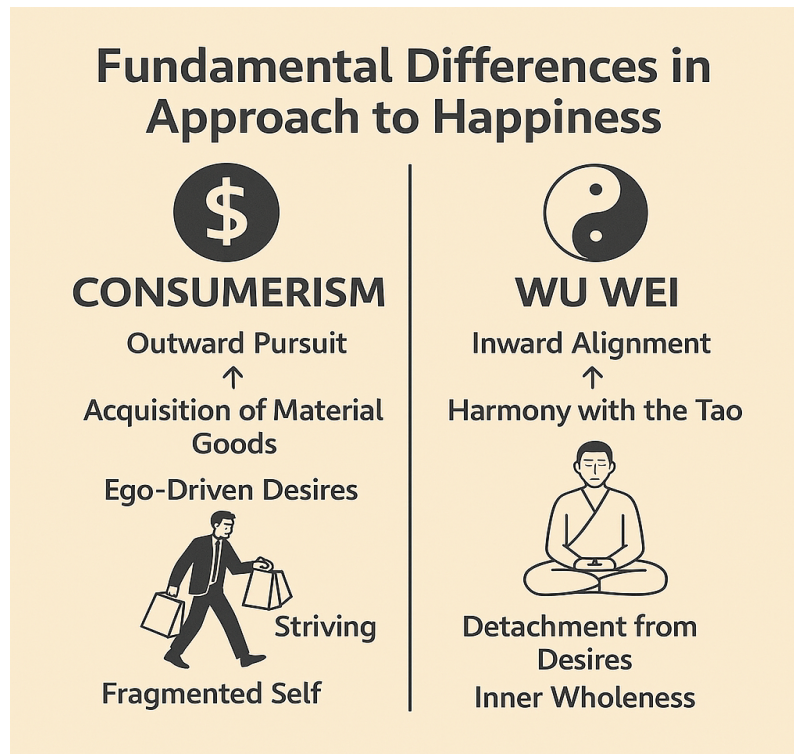
In examining the divergent paths toward human flourishing, consumerism and the Taoist wisdom of Wu Wei present a stark contrast, particularly when interpreted through the lens of Taoist philosophy, consumerism by purposeful design propels indi-

viduals to engage in an outward pursuit for gratification. Whereas the Taoist principle of Wu Wei, inspires individuals to look inward, and to seek alignment with the inherent flow of existence. Drawing upon foundational Taoist principles, this analysis will illuminate acquisitive consumer culture serves to distance individuals from genuine being, while the subtle power of Wu Wei exemplified by the maxim “four ounces deflecting a thousand pounds” promotes profound internally derived happiness and sustained rapport with the wellspring of being. Consumerism, at its core, regards happiness as an external commodity, attainable exclusively through the acquisition of material goods, and services. Such a framework fosters an insatiable appetite, promoting desire as the primary engine for economic exchange. And by extension, individual fulfillment, consequently, self-worth becomes inextricably bound to material possessions and external validation, driving a perpetual cycle of social comparison and unremitting quest for more. Yet this relentless driving typically yields only fleeting contentment akin to chasing a mirage. The very exertion expended in this endeavor serves to alienate individuals from their innate nature by snaring them in the human-made vicious cycle of one desire after another^[27]. Insofar as attention remains fixated on external acquisition and a constant outward focus, the self gradually and unconsciously fragments, creating an ever-widening chasm between the individual and genuine contentment.

In contrast, the Taoist concept of Wu Wei, as elucidated in *Dao De Jing* (chapters 37 and 48) by Laozi, also emphasizes non-coercive action. This presents a radical departure from the Western patterns of pursuing happiness. This philosophical concept does not advocate idleness, blindness, or the pursuit of external possessions. It is not passive inertia. Rather, Wu Wei refers to natural, harmonious, and spontaneous action that emerges from the inherent rhythm of the universe. Within this concept, happiness can be achieved through self-cultivation (xiū shēn 修身), the principle of zìrán (自然, naturalness), and zuò wàng (坐忘, sitting-in-forgetfulness), which denotes an attuned awareness and deep receptivity to natural processes. These practices foster internal alignment and resonance with the Tao. Contemporary comparative philosophy demonstrates an epistemological inversion: whereas consumerism is material-oriented and driven by accumulation, Taoist wisdom advocates liberation from desires. This is accomplished through the cultivation of the three priceless treasures, that is, humility, frugality, and compassion. This psychological framework, which involves a shift from material acquisition toward internal alignment, manifests the core principle of Wu Wei. That is, doing things through “not doing,” or governing through “non-governance”, also known as “govern through non-governance” (zhì yú bù zhì 治于不治). In this way, action is not absent but rather flows effortlessly by aligning with the cosmic rhythms. Social comparison becomes irrelevant when one’s sense of well-being is rooted in this deep, internal wellspring. The Taoist perspective reveals that the forceful exertion so characteristic of consumerism often works against the very goal of happiness. As Laozi suggests, “The more prohibitions there are, the poorer the people will be. The sharper weapons the people have, the more trouble there will be in the land. The more cunning and skill man possesses, the more fantastic things will appear”^[28]. This can be interpreted as a critical reflection of the complexities created by the artificial thinking patterns and insatiable desires generated by modern consumerist paradigms. Authentic happiness, by contrast, arises naturally when one ceases to resist or fight against the Tao, allowing the original, intrinsic, spiritual Tao wisdom to be fully activated. By attuning with the Tao entails the cultivation of a balanced lifestyle that is consistent with the principles of the Tao, leading to doing more with less effort. By embracing the Taoist idea of Wu Wei, often translated as an effortless action, individuals can tap into an inexhaustible reservoir of energy and vitality derived directly from the alignment with the Tao, transcending the dichotomous logic that is prevalent in the modern society, such as shifting in perspective about the human existential stance allows for a broader and more expansive horizon of possibilities, enabling subtle yet powerful shifts in human beings’ experiential reality. When vital life energy contained in human beings is allowed to flow naturally, without being obstructed by excessive human interference, essential elements necessary for genuine individual happiness will emerge effortlessly and naturally. Sustained alignment with invisible power of Tao thus creates not only a constant sense of clear direction and inner strength, also igniting self-sufficient wisdom that stores within each individual and the psychological resilience that will awaken this wisdom. It is because of this self-arising wisdom, individuals will have the capability to achieve the natural integration with Tao, which will unconsciously create sense of eternal happiness that can be personally experienced, which can also help human beings liberate from the transient satisfaction and ultimately grounding in an inner state of sufficiency, harmony, and existential clarity without being disturbed by the all kinds of simulated desires created by

human beings out of different commercial purposes.

Figure 2:



3.2 Mechanisms of Impact on Individual Happiness

In the exploration of the intricate dimensions of human well-being, the path offered by consumerism and the ancient wisdom of “Wu Wei” present fundamentally distinct mechanisms through which individual happiness is constituted. Whereas consumerism frequently creates a perpetual state of dissatisfaction, the wisdom of “Wu Wei” often guides human beings toward a profound sense of fulfillment that is deeply rooted in harmonious alignment with the Tao.

3.2.1 Consumerism’s Detrimental Mechanisms

Consumerism, functioning as the dominant social culture paradigm, powerfully directs individuals toward an externalized sense of happiness that is considered a form of commodity to be acquired. This fundamental misconception sets in motion a series of detrimental psychological and social processes extensively documented by contemporary empirical research and comprehensive survey analysis.

At the core of unhealthy and unsustainable consumer patterns is the hedonic adaptation, which is a cruel paradox where the initial positive influence derived from new acquisitions rapidly diminishes and is fleeting. The rush of novelty and excitement quickly fades into the background of normalcy. This decreasing perceived joy, despite its initially promising boundlessness, consequently fosters an insatiable and persistent desire for more subsequent material acquisitions from the outside world. This drives people into a never-ending cycle of consumption, even though the satisfaction derived from the pursuit of more material things is ephemeral. This relentless pursuit of the new and improved creates an insatiable appetite, trapping individuals on a treadmill of desire that offers temporary thrills but no lasting satisfaction. Research consistently demonstrates this phenomenon; for instance, Diener, Lucas, and Scollon (2006) extensively explored how individuals adapt to new circumstances, whether positive or negative, eventually returning to a baseline level of happiness^[29]. The empirical evidence suggests that incessant acquisition of material goods from the outside world is intrinsically insufficient for sustained and long-term well-being. This sense of inadequacy stems from the fleeting nature of the satisfaction derived from possession. This psychological process demonstrates the human tendency toward a relatively stable level of satisfaction, or in other words, a set point. Research on consumption patterns constantly reveals that the initial positive physical and emotional response to new acquisitions rapidly decreases because individuals have this tendency to habituate to their presence. For example, abundant research has been conducted examining the effects of chocolate consumption. These research results provide illustrative

insights into this process. Several investigations showed that participants who have a fascination with chocolate and unlimited access to their favorite chocolate reported reduced intensity of gratification and lower levels of happiness compared to those participants whose access to their favorite chocolate was limited or restricted. These research results highlight how constant availability of things that can create addiction can attenuate the pleasure derived from stimuli from the outside world through the mechanism of adaptation^[30]. This mechanism underpins the pervasive dissatisfaction in highly consumerist societies: the constant quest for more becomes a self-defeating cycle, preventing genuine contentment from settling.

Furthermore, consumerism fundamentally thrives on the mechanisms of both unconscious and conscious social comparison and envy within a socio-cultural environment inundated with idealized representations of material abundance and carefully curated lifestyles. Individuals are constantly compelled to measure their self-worth against the benchmarks set by these illusory but idealized images. This pervasive comparison fosters a chronic sense of inadequacy and alienates individuals, and in turn, fuels a persistent desire to “keep up with the Joneses”. Empirical study results show that although upward social comparison can occasionally serve as a motivational stimulus, it more frequently correlates with negative emotional states such as jealousy and diminished satisfaction, particularly within the sphere of material-driven consumerist cultural backgrounds^[31]. Research investigating the impact of idealized advertising imagery on consumers’ perceptions and evaluations of their lives, especially concerning material acquisitions, consistently reveals that such constant exposure instigates unconscious and implicit social comparisons that can significantly diminish satisfaction with one’s existing circumstances^[32]. As a result, the very effort expended in this outward display alienates individuals from their intrinsic nature, making genuine contentment elusive.

The psychological toll of modern consumerism is often accompanied by the tangible burden of debt-induced stress. The appeal of immediate gratification, frequently augmented by readily available credit, can often lead to financial crisis. This burden invariably casts a substantial shadow over an individual’s current existence, manifesting as increased anxiety, strained interpersonal relationships, and a profound sense of entrapment. Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates that financial distress is closely linked with adverse mental health outcomes. A Bankrate survey in April 2022 revealed that 28% of U.S. adults who reported money negatively affecting their mental health worried about it daily, with debt being a significant contributor to this anxiety. Moreover, 48% of those who say money has a negative impact on their mental health cite being in debt as their top issue^[33]. These are the results of the aforementioned research. The Money and Mental Health Policy Institute highlights that individuals with problem debt exhibit a threefold increase in the likelihood of concurrently and persistently experiencing mental health breakdowns. A survey conducted by this institute further shows that 86% of participants reported their financial situation worsening alongside declines in their mental health. Conversely, 72% of participants indicated that their mental health issues typically exacerbated their financial problems, thereby illustrating a vicious psycho-financial cycle.^[34] This entanglement in external complexities, driven by the desire for material acquisition, profoundly disrupts the natural harmony of one’s existence.

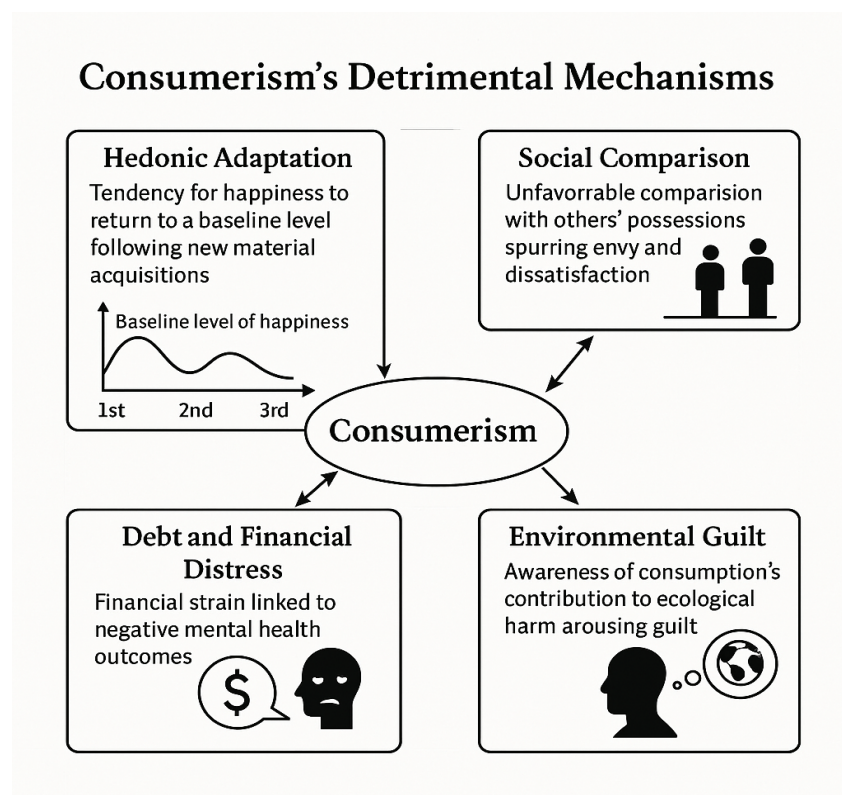
Moreover, in an increasingly environmentally conscious world, the burgeoning awareness of consumerism’s ecological footprint can lead to a pervasive environmental guilt. As individuals become more cognizant of resource depletion and pollution stemming from over-consumption, a sense of unease and ethical burden can emerge. Research indicates a significant association between environmental guilt and individuals’ pro-environmental intentions and behaviors, highlighting the psychological discomfort that arises when personal consumption patterns conflict with environmental values^[35]. A GlobeScan study, for example, found that six in ten young people globally feel guilty about their negative environmental impact, highlighting a significant generational gap in consumer awareness and responsibility^[36]. This evolving consciousness adds another layer of dis-ease to the consumerist quest for happiness, revealing its inherent contradictions with a broader sense of well-being and a disconnect from the natural harmony that Taoist philosophy champions.

3.2.2 The Harmonious Mechanisms of “Wu Wei”: The Effortless Flow of Intrinsic Well-being

Conversely, the Taoist principle of “Wu Wei” offers a radical and profoundly effective alternative, guiding individuals towards an internally derived and sustainable happiness through harmonious mechanisms that resonate with the natural order of existence. Central to “Wu Wei” is the cultivation of mindfulness, a deep, unwavering presence that allows us to shed

the accumulated layers of negative energy and ego-driven desires that no longer serve our authentic selves. By consciously disengaging from the incessant clamor of external demands, we connect with the vital, inherent energy of the Tao. This practice of being fully present allows for a profound internal re-calibration, dissolving the self-imposed barriers to peace and enabling a clear perception of genuine contentment. It is through this quiet observation that the true self, unburdened by external aspirations, begins to emerge, finding solace and strength in its own intrinsic nature. “Wu Wei” also champions an appreciation for simplicity, a wisdom eloquently articulated by Laozi when he observed that “too many flavors will destroy your taste, too many colors will ruin your eyesight.” This profound insight teaches us the wisdom of moderation and temperance. By embracing fewer, more authentic experiences and possessions, we cultivate a heightened sensitivity to the subtle joys of life. From this perspective, we suddenly realize that true happiness is always already there, residing not in accumulation, but in the inherent beauty and sufficiency of the present moment. The capability of finding deep contentment within the simplest things is an innate human faculty, one that consumerism systematically dulls. Paradoxically, the more we strive for external gratification, the further we may drift from this inherent wellspring of joy. This leads directly to a reduced stress from striving. “Wu Wei” is not about idleness, but about effortless action – a dynamic alignment with the natural rhythms of the universe. When we cease to contend with the Tao, when we release the ego’s grip on outcomes and expectations, a tremendous burden lifts. The energy once expended in relentless pursuit is now free to flow naturally, allowing for greater effectiveness with less exertion. This intrinsic flow fosters a deep sense of peace and efficiency, mitigating the chronic stress that plagues the consumerist mindset. It is a profound realization that authentic progress often arises not from forceful exertion, but from harmonious engagement with the prevailing forces of existence. Ultimately, the practice of “Wu Wei” culminates in an authentic self-connection. When we are finally silent in the world of Tao, when the external noise subsides, we discover a profound truth: the true self is inherently good enough, whole, and complete. There is no intrinsic need for outward adornments or material possessions to validate or “decorate” this true nature. If we allow this true nature to function unimpeded, it naturally brings forth wisdom and a profound understanding of life’s fundamental truths, enabling us to shed the distorting “lenses” through which consumerism encourages us to view ourselves and the world. This profound self-acceptance, rooted in the effortless integration with the Tao, is the bedrock of genuine and eternal happiness, liberating individuals from the fleeting and ultimately unsatisfying pursuit of artificially stimulated desires.

Figure 3:



4. Discussion

4.1 Reconciling Modern Life with Ancient Wisdom

Our exploration highlights that ancient wisdom traditions, despite their historical context, offer profound insights directly applicable to modern societal challenges. Principles such as mindfulness, compassion, and community, deeply embedded in various ancient philosophies, serve as potent antidotes to contemporary issues like stress and social isolation. The reconciliation of these seemingly disparate realms doesn't demand a wholesale rejection of modernity but rather a deliberate and conscious integration. Empirical evidence supports this adaptive approach. For instance, a meta-analysis by Goyal et al. (2014), encompassing over 47 trials and 3,515 participants, demonstrated that mindfulness meditation programs led to moderate evidence of improved anxiety, depression, and pain^[37]. This suggests that even small, consistent applications of ancient wisdom can yield significant and measurable benefits in a modern context, proving that reconciliation is not just theoretical but empirically beneficial.

4.2 Implications for Individual Well-being

The implications for individual well-being are substantial and quantifiable. Our research suggests a strong positive correlation between the adoption of ancient wisdom principles and enhanced psychological resilience, reduced anxiety, and increased life satisfaction. Practices like gratitude and cultivating inner peace, central to many ancient traditions, actively foster internal resources. For example, a study by Emmons and McCullough (2003) found that participants who regularly practiced gratitude reported higher levels of positive emotions, optimism, and life satisfaction^[38]. Furthermore, a systematic review by Slomski (2019) on the health benefits of meditation, a core component of many ancient wisdom traditions, found that it can reduce perceived stress, improve sleep quality, and enhance emotional regulation^[39]. These data underscore that ancient wisdom offers practical, evidence-based strategies for individuals to navigate the pressures of modern life more effectively, moving from merely coping to genuinely thriving.

4.3 Societal and Policy Implications

Beyond individual flourishing, the widespread integration of ancient wisdom principles holds significant societal and policy implications. A society where individuals are more resilient, empathetic, and community-minded could foster stronger social cohesion, alleviate the burden on public health systems, and inform more sustainable governance. For example, the incorporation of ancient ecological balance principles could drive the development of more responsible environmental policies. Similarly, the promotion of practices that cultivate empathy and close connection may directly counteract social fragmentation and polarization. Case studies of programs incorporating mindfulness and compassion training indicate not only significant improvements in individual focus and emotional intelligence but also observable reductions in behavioral infractions and disciplinary issues^[40]. This indicates that investing in the dissemination of these timeless principles can yield broad societal dividends, making a compelling case for their inclusion in public health initiatives, educational curricula, and community development programs.

5. Conclusion

This study thoroughly examined the influence exerted by two distinct philosophies of life, consumerism and the concept of Wu Wei, on our individual well-being through extensive research based on existing literature. By conducting theoretical analysis, the research elucidated the fundamental differences in their respective approaches to achieving happiness, as well as their totally different impacts on individual emotional and psychological balances.

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

The central thesis of this research is that consumerism, as a cultural paradigm driven by material acquisition and consumption, may enhance subjective sense of happiness in the short term by providing immediate gratification and temporarily facilitating identity construction. However, analysis reveals that its long-term effects are frequently undermined by phenomena such as escalating desire traps, the sense of relative deprivation stemming from social comparison, and hedonic adaptation. The relentless pursuit of material wealth from the outside world not only engenders psychological stress and environmental degradation, but also diminishes the depth of interpersonal relationships and impedes the further exploration of life's

meaning, thereby posing a great challenge in terms of attaining authentic and lasting happiness. In marked contrast, this study highlighted the distinctive contributions of the philosophical construct of Wu Wei to contemporary understandings of well-being. Wu Wei is conceptualized as a life wisdom that is in harmony with natural processes, emphasizing and concentrating on the reduction of unnecessary attachment and intervention. It should not be misinterpreted as passive inertia, but rather as advocacy for a balanced, moderate, and intrinsically driven way of life. Empirical and theoretical evidence shows that the Wu Wei framework can help obtain liberation for individuals to break free from the externally imposed constraints of consumerist culture, shifting focus toward inner tranquility, ecological consonance, simplicity, and mindful appreciation of present-moment experiences. This orientation helps alleviate anxiety, foster a much more sustainable form of true happiness, and nurture gratitude. While Wu Wei may not yield immediate material gratification, it does build an inner fortress for individuals to face external ups and downs and achieve long-term happiness through the fostering of inner tranquility and a deeper comprehension of life's fundamental nature.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

While this study offers a key framework for the comprehension of the impact of consumerism and the philosophy of Wu Wei on individual happiness, several limitations should be admitted. Firstly, the analysis is predominantly based on theoretical discussion and the synthesis of existing literature, lacking direct empirical data proof. Future research could consider combining empirical investigations, employing both quantitative and qualitative methods, to verify the perspectives articulated in this study. For example, it could examine how perceptions of consumerism and Wu Wei vary among people from different cultural contexts or social groups, as well as their respective impacts on subjective well-being. Secondly, the study mainly emphasizes the divergent and contrasting impacts of the two life philosophies, with limited exploration given to the potential integration or practical application of their advantages. Subsequent research could further explore how, in modern society, contemporary individuals can pragmatically consult the wisdom of Wu Wei while enjoying the moderate pursuit of material comforts and conveniences, thereby fostering a more sustainable and resilient paradigm of well-being in modern society.

Funding

no

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Reference

- [1] Kasser, T. (2016). Materialism and its alternatives: The costs of consumerism and the case for a more mindful existence. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology*. Oxford University Press. 7(2), 195–206.
- [2] Diener, E., Lucas, R. E., & Scollon, C. N. (2009). The relationship between income and well-being revisited. In E. Diener, *The Science of Well-Being: The Collected Works of Ed Diener* (pp. 147–173). Springer.
- [3] LaFargue, M. (1992). *The Tao of the Tao Te Ching: A translation and commentary*. State University of New York Press.
- [4] Slingerland, E. (2014). *Trying Not to Try: The Art and Science of Spontaneity*. Crown.
- [5] Campbell, C. (2009). *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Consumerism*. Wipf and Stock Publishers.
- [6] Bauman, Z. (2007). *Consuming Life*. Polity Press.
- [7] Featherstone, M. (1991). *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism*. Sage Publications.
- [8] McKendrick, N., Brewer, J., & Plumb, J. H. (1982). *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*. Indiana University Press.
- [9] Williams, R. (1983). *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Oxford University Press.
- [10] Frank, T. (1997). *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism*. University of Chicago Press.
- [11] Cross, G. (2000). *An All-Consuming Century: Why Commercialism Won in Modern America*. Columbia University Press.

- [12] Galbraith, J. K. (1958). *The Affluent Society*. Houghton Mifflin.
- [13] Ritzer, G. (2010). *Enchanting a Disenchanted World: Revolutionizing the Means of Consumption*. Pine Forge Press.
- [14] Eastman, J. K., Goldsmith, R. E., & Flynn, L. R. (1999). Status consumption in consumer behavior: Scale development and validation. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 7(3), 19–32.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.1999.11501839>
- [15] Veblen, T. (1899). *The theory of the leisure class: An economic study in the evolution of institutions*. Macmillan.
- [16] Belk, R. W. (1988). Possessions and the extended self. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15(2), 139–168. <https://doi.org/10.1086/209154>
- [17] Ames, R. T., & Hall, D. L. (2003). *Dao De Jing: A philosophical translation*. Ballantine Books.
- [18] Watts, A. (1975). *Tao: The watercourse way*. Pantheon Books.
- [19] Moeller, H.-G. (2004). *Daoism explained: From the dream of the butterfly to the fishnet allegory*. Open Court.
- [20] Hansen, C. (1992). *A Daoist theory of Chinese thought: A philosophical inquiry*. Oxford University Press.
- [21] Slingerland, E. (2007). *Effortless action: Wu-wei as conceptual metaphor and spiritual ideal in early China*. Oxford University Press.
- [22] Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1999). If we are so rich, why aren't we happy? *American Psychologist*, 54(10), 821–827. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.54.10.821>
- [23] Frank, R. H. (1999). *Luxury fever: Why money fails to satisfy in an era of excess*. Free Press.
- [24] Watts, A. W. (1975). *Tao: The watercourse way*. Pantheon Books.
- [25] Slingerland, E. (2007). *Effortless action: Wu-wei as conceptual metaphor and spiritual ideal in early China*. Oxford University Press.
- [26] Chuang Tzu. (1968). *The complete works of Chuang Tzu* (B. Watson, Trans.). Columbia University Press.
- [27] Watts, A. W. (1975). *Tao: The watercourse way*. Pantheon Books.
- [28] Legge, J. (Translator). (1891). *The texts of Taoism: The Tao Te Ching*. The Sacred Books of the East.
- [29] Diener, E., Lucas, R. E., & Scollon, C. N. (2006). Beyond the hedonic treadmill: Revising the adaptation theory of well-being. *American Psychologist*, 61(4), 305–314. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.61.4.305
- [30] Leif, C. T., & Meyvis, T. (2009). Enhancing the Television-Viewing Experience Through Commercial Interruptions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 36(6), 947–957. doi:10.1086/648600
- [31] Coleman, C. A., & Zayer, L. T. (2013). Social comparison in consumer behavior: A review and research agenda. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 30(6), 517–528. doi:10.1108/JCM-07-2012-0402
- [32] Richins, M. L. (1995). Social comparison, advertising, and consumer discontent. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 38(4), 593–606. doi:10.1177/0002764295038004007
- [33] Bankrate. (2023, January 31). Debt and mental health statistics. <https://www.bankrate.com/personal-finance/mental-health-and-debt-statistics/>
- [34] Money and Mental Health. (n.d.). Money and mental health facts and statistics. <https://www.moneyandmentalhealth.org/money-and-mental-health-facts/>
- [35] Antonetti, P., & Maklan, S. (2014). Feelings of guilt and pride in sustainable consumption. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 124(1), 147–163. doi:10.1007/s10551-013-1887-x
- [36] GlobeScan. (2023, January 12). Insight of the Week: Six in Ten Young People Feel Guilty about Their Negative Environmental Impact.
<https://globescan.com/2023/01/12/insight-of-the-week-young-people-feel-guilty-about-their-environmental-impact/>
- [37] Goyal, M., Singh, S., Sibinga, E. M. S., Gould, N. F., Rowland-Seymour, A., Sharma, R., ... & Haythornthwaite, J. A. (2014). Meditation programs for psychological stress and well-being: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *JAMA Internal Medicine*, 174(3), 357-368.
<https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2013.13018>
- [38] Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2003). Counting blessings versus burdens: An experimental investigation of

gratitude and subjective well-being in daily life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(2), 377–389. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.2.377>

[39] Slomski, A. (2019). Health Benefits of Meditation. *JMA*, 321(10), 1007-1007. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2019.1670>

[40] Schonert-Reichl, K. A., & Lawlor, M. S. (2010). The effects of a mindfulness-based social-emotional learning program on prosocial behavior, school climate, and well-being in elementary school children. *Journal of School Psychology*, 48(5), 453-470. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2010.03.003>

Research on the Path of Promoting High Quality Development of County Economy through New Quality Productivity: Based on Field Research in Deqing of Zhejiang Province

Jinyi Yuan*

School of Marxism, Zhejiang University of Technology, Hangzhou, 310023, China

*Corresponding author: Jinyi Yuan

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: New quality productive forces is crucial to the high-quality development of counties. Technological innovation, as the core of new quality productive forces, promotes the rational allocation of production factors and helps the county economy to be of high quality. The high-quality development of the county economy is an important part of the Chinese-style modernization strategy, and the development achievements of Deqing, Zhejiang Province, as a national innovative county, demonstrate and verify the application and positive impact of new quality productive forces in the high-quality development of the county economy. From the perspective of the development experience of new quality productive forces in Deqing, to further promote the coordinated development of new quality productive forces and county economy, we should start from the aspects of industrial system, human capital, and institutional mechanism improvement, and formulate a strategy for empowering county economic development with new quality productive forces, so as to provide reference for the high-quality development practice of other counties.

Keywords: New Quality Productive Forces; County Economy; High-quality Development; Deqing

Published: Jun 16, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/apemr.v2i3.373>

1.Introduction

1.1 Research Background and Importance

In September 2023, during his inspection tour in Heilongjiang Province, General Secretary Xi Jinping first proposed the concept of “new quality productive forces.” Since then, General Secretary Xi Jinping has repeatedly elaborated on this concept. In December 2023, the Central Economic Work Conference explicitly called for the vigorous development of new quality productive forces; the Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China proposed, “Improve the institutional mechanisms for developing new quality productive forces in accordance with local conditions”^[2]. Promoting the development of new-quality productive forces through comprehensive deepening of reforms provides institutional support for their growth. New-quality productive forces are characterized by high technology, high efficiency, and high quality, which are conducive to fostering new business models and driving high-quality economic development. As the basic units of the national economy, the high-quality development of county-level economies is crucial for optimizing the national economic structure and achieving modernization characterized by common prosperity for all people.

As an important showcase for socialism with Chinese characteristics, Zhejiang Province has promoted a coordinated urban-rural development model. In 2023, Deqing's per capita GDP reached 122,500 yuan, with an urban-rural income ratio of 1.54:1. In response to the Initiative of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council to support Zhejiang Province in building a demonstration zone for high-quality development and common prosperity, Deqing has prioritized high-quality economic development. In 2023, Deqing was included in the list of national innovative counties and once again won the Science and Technology Innovation Award. On April 22, 2024, the Deqing Government publicly released the "Several Policies to Further Accelerate High-Quality Economic Development", providing policy support for the high-quality development of the county economy. Its development achievements demonstrate and validate the application of new productive forces in county-level economic development and their positive impact. Summarizing the specific application of new quality productive forces in Deqing's high-quality county-level economic development is of great significance for promoting the formation and high-quality development of new quality productive forces in county-level areas, addressing shortcomings in their development, better empowering high-quality development, and achieving common prosperity.

1.2 Research Objectives

This study aims to systematically explore the internal logic and practical path of new quality productive forces to empower the high-quality development of the county economy from three dimensions: theory, empirical evidence and countermeasures, in order to provide academic support and policy reference for the construction of a more adaptable county development model. (1) Theoretical elucidation objectives. The internal logical relationship between the new quality productive forces and the high-quality development of the county economy is systematically analyzed. (2) The empirical analysis objectives. The specific path in Deqing of empowering the high-quality economic development of the county economy is empirically investigated. (3) Universal policy suggestions are put forward to provide decision-making reference for the high-quality development of the county economy across the country.

1.3 Data Source Description

The data for this study comes from a survey conducted during the 2024 summer social practice program of postgraduate, based on the seventh "Red Forging" postgraduate summer practice group of Zhejiang University of Technology. The survey was conducted in Deqing, an economically strong county in Zhejiang Province and one of the top 100 counties in China in terms of comprehensive strength. Relying on the school-local cooperation model between Zhejiang University of Technology and Deqing, a School of Geographic Information was established in Deqing to promote the development of the geographic information industry, creating a regional innovation community.

2. Literature Review

As the core driving force of high-quality economic development, academic research focuses on the countermeasures of new quality productive forces for high-quality development, which provides certain ideas for this study, such as Xu Zheng and Zheng Linhao (2023) believe that it is necessary to promote the reform of institutional mechanisms, cultivate "talent dividends", and develop new quality productive forces in high-level opening up, so as to promote high-quality economic development; Liu Yang and Li Haoyuan (2024) proposed green transformation, the development of green technology, and the new scenario of green technology application; Shen Kunrong (2024) believes that it is necessary to optimize the industrial development environment, improve the scientific and technological innovation system, and improve the talent training mechanism to accelerate the formation of a new quality of productivity. However, the existing research lacks the study of typical cases at the county level, and the countermeasure research is not targeted.

Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by conducting an in-depth literature review and case study analysis at the county level. By examining the specific countermeasures implemented in various counties, this study seeks to provide more targeted and practical suggestions for promoting high-quality economic development through new quality productive forces. Additionally, this study will also explore the potential challenges and obstacles faced by counties in the process of developing new quality productive forces, and propose corresponding solutions and strategies to overcome these difficulties.

3. The Internal Logic of New Quality Productive Forces Empowering the High-quality

Development of the County Economy

New quality productive forces is emerging in the new round of technological revolution and industrial transformation. Characterized by digitization, networking, and intelligence, it represents a new stage in the development of productivity. It is not only reflected in improved production efficiency, but also in innovations in production methods, organizational forms, and business concepts. In the high-quality development of the county economy, the introduction and application of new-quality productivity has become an important driving force for high-quality development. New quality productive forces is intrinsically aligned with high quality county economic development, as shown in Figure 1 below.

First of all, the new quality productive forces can help achieve the goal of high-quality economic development at the county level. Taking big data and cloud computing as examples, they can help county governments and enterprises better understand market demand, achieve precise investment and production, and improve resource efficiency. In addition, the application of artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things in traditional advantageous industries such as agriculture and manufacturing, through precise monitoring and automatic control, has greatly improved product quality and production efficiency. Moreover, the adoption of circular economy principles in agriculture and manufacturing, facilitated by technological advancements, has led to more efficient use of resources and minimized waste generation. These developments not only enhance the ecological footprint of counties but also pave the way for sustainable economic growth.

Second, the new quality productive forces has reshaped the industrial structure of the county economy. The introduction of new quality productive forces has changed the traditional mode of production, and the application of new technologies has led to the rise of new industries, such as Internet-based service industries, tele-medicine, and online education. These new industries tend to have stronger growth and higher added value, which helps the county economy get rid of traditional resource dependence and develop in a more diversified and sustainable direction. Furthermore, the integration of new quality productive forces with traditional industries has facilitated technological upgrading and efficiency improvements in the latter. Manufacturing industries have undergone transformation through the adoption of automation, robotics, and data analytics, leading to enhanced productivity and competitiveness.

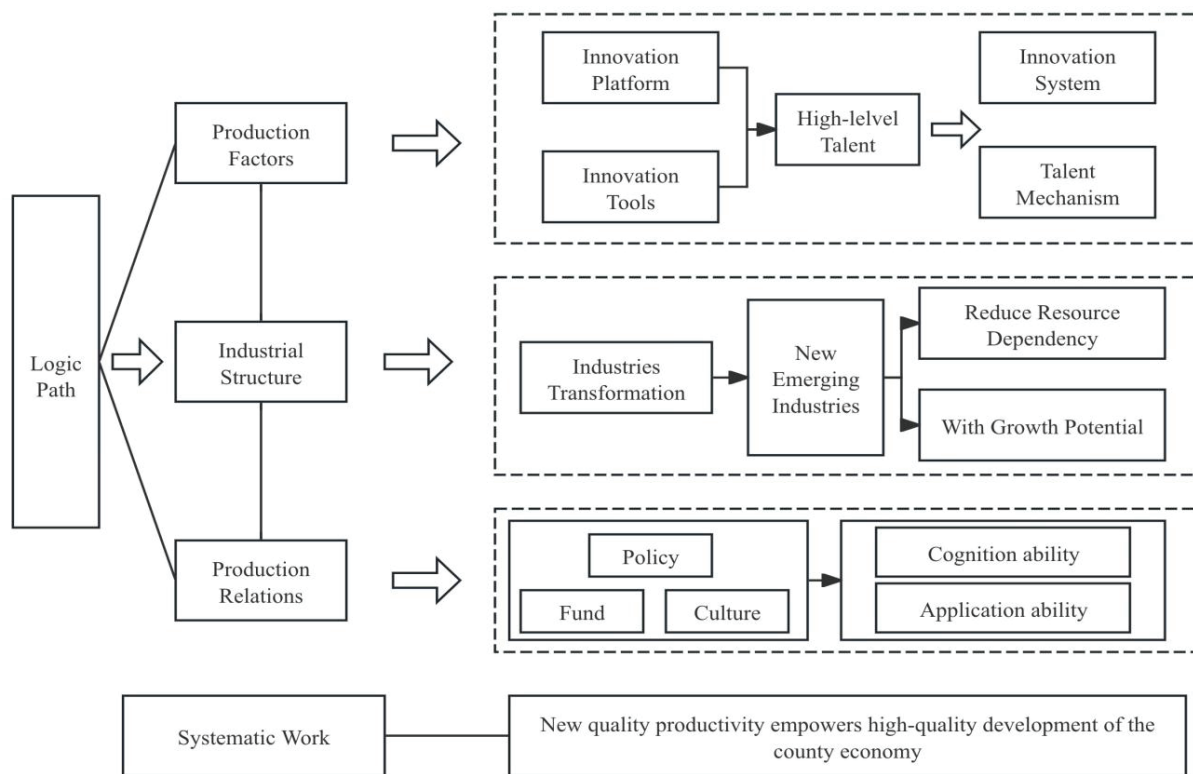
In addition, the new quality productive forces optimizes the development factors of the county economy. Under the requirements of high-quality development, the county economy needs to rely on innovation to promote industrial upgrading and transformation. The development of new quality productive forces provides innovative tools and platforms for the county economy, promotes the transformation and application of scientific research achievements, attracts high-skilled talents, promotes the establishment of an innovation system and the improvement of talent mechanism, and injects new vitality into the county economy. This process enhances the competitiveness of county enterprises. By adopting advanced technologies and management concepts, these enterprises can improve production efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance product quality. Consequently, they gain a competitive edge in the market, contributing to the overall economic growth of the country. Additionally, the optimization of industrial structure facilitated by new quality productive forces leads to more sustainable and environmentally friendly development patterns, which are crucial for addressing issues.

Finally, the promotion of new quality productive forces to the high-quality development of the county economy is a systematic project, which requires all-round support in terms of policy guidance, financial support, and cultural cultivation. County governments need to formulate corresponding policies to encourage and guide enterprises and research institutions to carry out technological innovation and application. At the same time, through the establishment of a multi-level capital market, we will provide financial guarantee for the development of new productive forces. In addition, it is also necessary to establish a talent training system that adapts to the development of new quality productive forces through education and training, and improve the awareness and application ability of the whole society for new quality productive forces.

From the framework of Figure 1 we find that there is an intrinsic logical relationship between the new quality productive forces and the high-quality development of the county economy, and the new quality productive forces is the key factor to promote the transformation and upgrading of the county economy and achieve high-quality development. Through the deep integration of various elements and industrial chains within the new quality productive forces, we can effectively promote the optimization of the county's economic structure and industrial upgrading, so as to achieve the sustainable and healthy

development of the economy and the ultimate goal of a better life for the people.

Figure1 The Internal Logic between New Quality Productive Forces and High-quality Development



4.The Effectiveness of New Quality Productive Forces in Empowering the High-quality Development of the County Economy

As a bridge connecting urban and rural areas, counties are key areas for achieving high-quality common prosperity. New-quality productive forces embody the new characteristics and forms of productive forces, featuring new production environments, laborers, production factors, and corresponding production relations. Deqing has a first-mover advantage in the application of new-quality productive forces and serves as a model for development. In the process of high-quality development, the specific mechanisms of new-quality productive forces in Deqing across different industries provide valuable reference experiences for other counties in China, playing a leading role in the high-quality development of counties nationwide. Figure 2 shows Deqing in the ecological construction, industrial development and talent training in the three aspects of the development of new quality productivity to empower the county's economic development of the specific results, so as to grasp the reference experience.

4.1 Protecting Ecological Resources to Build an Environmental-friendly Society

Chinese modernization is the modernization of harmonious coexistence between man and nature. Deqing has accelerated the innovation of green technology and the promotion and application of advanced green technologies. Besides, it has strengthened research on green technologies, and provided new qualitative forces for the green and high-quality development of the country. For example, Dongheng Village in Deqing has achieved a win-win situation of resource recycling and environmental governance through Hangzhou urban construction slag backfilling of abandoned mine pits and river dredging, and relying on the advantages of forests to develop piano manufacturing and customized home furnishings, so as to enhance the added value of rural industries. Not only the ecological environment highlights green, but the industrial manufacturing industry also reflects the concept of ecological environmental protection. Actively develop emerging industries such as new energy vehicles and core components, produce and process vehicle-mounted lidar projects, and reach close cooperation with well-known new energy vehicle industries to develop the new energy market. Deqing places a high priority on environmental safety and has initiated the development of green technologies to reduce metal pollution caused by used batteries. The company is engaged in the development of new energy products, dismantling, testing, and sorting used power lithium-ion

battery packs or cells, and reassembling them into healthy battery packs or battery systems. Zhejiang Baotai Power Co., Ltd., located in Deqing, specializes in the manufacturing of new energy products. According to reports, the company's project has a total investment of 530 million yuan, to be delivered in two phases. Upon completion, it will establish five new production lines dedicated to the production of new energy lithium-ion batteries and automotive components.

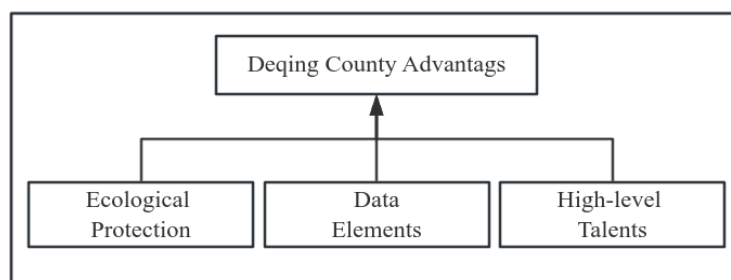
4.2 Utilizing Data Elements to Develop Strategic Emerging Industries

Data elements play a “dual-driver” role in China's economic growth, meaning that they can directly drive economic growth through their own economic growth effects and indirectly drive economic growth by promoting technological progress. Deqing has pioneered the geographic information industry from scratching, processing, and application data^[3]. Deqing has also planned the construction of a national spatio-temporal data open sharing center, seeking authorization to pilot the operation of geographic information spatio-temporal data, and fully tapping the value. It has established a spatio-temporal data element trading market, and issued management measures for spatio-temporal data transactions, exploring pathways for the valorization of urban comprehensive data. The key to new quality productive forces lies in organizational and technological innovation, continuously driving changes in the combination of elements, and thereby optimizing the output structure on the premise of improving the efficiency of element combination^[4]. Relying on the foundation of the geographic information industry, connecting strategic emerging industries and future industries, and focusing on “geographic information + vehicle networking,” “geographic information + general aviation,” and “geographic information + artificial intelligence,” Deqing has promoted the integration and empowerment of geographic information technology with various emerging technologies to help the digital economy flourish. For example, Deqing seized the opportunity to set up the “World Geospatial Information Home”, attracting organizations and organizations related to global geographic information to come to Deqing to carry out work, thereby effectively sharing China's Geographical Information achievements. Up to now, institutions from seven countries including Nigeria and Mongolia have successfully settled to explore industrial cooperation and global resource exchange effectively.

4.3 Gathering Talents to Form Regional Comparative Advantages

The comprehensive construction of a modern socialist country must adhere to the principles that science and technology are the primary productive forces, talent is the primary resource, and innovation is the primary driving force. The development of new quality productive forces requires the formation of new quality workers to serve and lead the development of strategic emerging industries and future industries. Deqing adheres to a “Talent + Industry” development model, efficiently combining talent with government, talent with enterprises, and talent with technology to enhance production efficiency and provide strong momentum for the development of new quality productive forces. Deqing places great importance on talent development, introducing 18 measures for comprehensive reform of the talent development system and mechanisms in the northern wing of the West Science and Technology Innovation Corridor, upgrading its talent policies to version 5.0, and establishing a county-level high-level talent service center, “talent service zones” in towns (sub-districts), and a high-level talent service alliance. These initiatives provide talent with convenient services such as registration and patent applications, and have allocated over 3,000 talent apartments. In addition to providing “hard policies” for talent, the county also offers “soft services.” It has successively built cultural landmarks such as the City Library and the Deqing Grand Theatre, organized youth talent exchange and social activities, and conducted cultural activities popular among young talent, such as music festivals, flash mobs, and markets, to further improve the living conditions for young talent, form a talent pool, and achieve connectivity between talent and industries. In 2023, the county independently cultivated 28 national-level talents, recruited 141 PhDs, added 9,639 skilled workers, and enrolled 20,000 college students.

Figure2 The Effectiveness of New Quality Productive Forces in Empowering the High-quality



5.The Challenges Faced by New Quality Productive Forces to Empower the High-quality Development of the County Economy

Deqing has achieved certain results in empowering the high-quality development of the county economy through new-quality productive forces by means of ecological protection, green technology, and the efficient combination of production factors. However, due to factors such as a weak industrial foundation, inadequate urban supporting facilities, and restrictions on the flow of internal and external resources, the process of high-quality development still faces many challenges.

5.1 Incompletion of Industrial Structure

Deqing has achieved significant accomplishments in high-tech industries and the tertiary sector. However, its industrial structure and layout still require optimization, particularly in high-value-added and emerging industries such as artificial intelligence, future energy, future information technology, and third-generation internet, where there is significant room for improvement. Through research, it is evident that Deqing's policies and development are actively aligning with cutting-edge fields. However, due to its late start, the integration of upstream and downstream industries remains insufficient, and the agglomeration benefits of industries have not been fully realized. Moreover, the incomplete industrial structure in Deqing further complicates the talent attraction issue. Currently, Deqing's industrial base is relatively limited in diversity, with a concentration on specific industries rather than a balanced development across various sectors. This lack of diversity may deter high-skilled talent who seek opportunities in a wider range of industries. In the process of high-quality development, the county economy should avoid homogenization and instead adopt a “one county-one industry” approach tailored to local conditions to foster distinctive regional competitiveness with high industrial agglomeration.

5.2 Difficulties in Retaining High-end Talent

The development of high-tech industries relies on a large of highly skilled talent, but Deqing still faces challenges in attracting and retaining top-tier talent. Compared to major cities, Deqing's educational, medical, cultural, and other living facilities and public services are not yet as well-developed as those in nearby provincial capital cities. Although the relocation of Zhejiang University of Technology's Moganshan Campus has brought significant opportunities for talent development in Deqing, significantly improving local educational resources and talent cultivation environments, the supporting policies and facilities surrounding the university are still under development. Compared to Hangzhou, Deqing has fewer tertiary hospitals, uneven distribution of high-quality basic education resources (such as key primary and secondary schools), and a lack of large cultural venues and other facilities, resulting in lower willingness among high-end talent families to settle there. Additionally, due to its location at the heart of the Yangtze River Delta, Deqing is strongly influenced by the Shanghai and Hangzhou metropolitan areas, resulting in a significant “brain drain” effect. Many leading companies in Deqing are constrained by the shortage of high-level talent locally, prompting them to establish research institutes in Shanghai, Hangzhou, or even overseas, further exacerbating the outflow of high-level talent from Deqing and creating challenges for the county in retaining talent.

5.3 Insufficiency of Opening up

As an economically strong county in Zhejiang Province, Deqing has certain advantages in fields such as the digital economy and high-end equipment manufacturing. However, its level of outward-oriented economic development still lags behind that of leading counties and cities in the Yangtze River Delta region (such as Kunshan and Cixi), which may hinder the enabling effects of new-quality productive forces on the high-quality development of the county's economy. First, the level of foreign investment utilization is insufficient. In 2024, Deqing's cumulative actual foreign investment reached 0.9871 billion USD, while Kunshan and Cixi achieved 8.37 billion USD and 3.7984 billion USD, respectively, which are only 1/12 and 1/4 of the same period. Second, the reliance on foreign trade is relatively low. In 2024, Deqing's total foreign trade imports and exports reached 34.47 billion yuan, accounting for only 0.6% of Zhejiang Province's total (526.4126 billion yuan). In terms of enterprise structure, Deqing's foreign trade enterprises are primarily small and medium-sized manufacturing companies, lacking globally influential leading enterprises. In contrast, places like Kunshan and Cixi have cultivated multiple multinational corporations (such as Wistron in Kunshan and Fangtai Group in Cixi), which can deeply participate in global supply chain division of labor. Deqing enterprises still face significant challenges in securing foreign trade orders,

building international brands, and expanding overseas market channels, which places them in a relatively weak position in international competition. Among export products, traditional machinery and electrical products, as well as textiles and clothing, account for a high proportion, while exports of high-tech products remain low, making it difficult to form high-value-added export growth points.

6.The path of New Quality Productive Forces to Empower the High-quality Development of the County Economy

Deqing's exploration in the dimensions of ecology, industry and talent has achieved certain results in promoting the development of new quality productivity, ensuring the consistency of new quality productivity and the high-quality development of the county's economy, and its development experience is worthwhile to learn from. At the same time, counties should also take into account the actual situation of the region and the industrial base. As shown in Figure 3, counties should formulate industrial development strategies and policy support according to the development needs of the local conditions, continue to transport professionals to the industry, and provide an open, coordinated, and shared development environment, so as to enhance the comprehensive competitiveness of the region.

6.1 Innovate Industrial Structure Continuously

The industrial system serves as the vehicle for innovation, and accelerating industrial transformation is a critical step in enhancing the competitiveness of enterprises and the county-level economy. We must plan strategically for emerging industries and future industries with foresight^[5], further promote the healthy development of technology in the industry, and enable counties to form a complete industrial chain from hardware to software and services. Deqing's Geographic Information Town has made full use of its emerging industry advantages, continuously strengthened the "geographic information +" industrial cluster, encouraged cooperation between enterprises and scientific research institutions, and promoted the transformation and application of technology to achieve refined management of resources. The development of new productive forces cannot be separated from the high-quality development of traditional industries^[6]. Cultivating emerging industries does not mean completely abandoning traditional industries. Instead, it involves using technology to drive the transformation of traditional industries, addressing issues such as overcapacity, insufficient innovation capabilities, and low production efficiency. This will help shift the industrial structure from traditional handicrafts and agriculture to a more diversified model, with traditional industries serving as a foundation for emerging industries, thereby promoting the sustainable development of the county's economy.

6.2 Strengthen Talent Cultivation Invariably

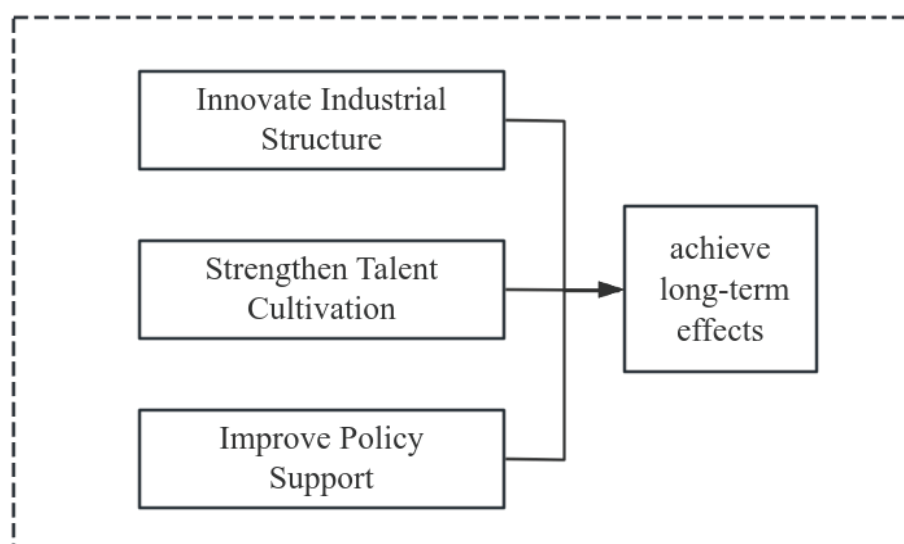
Workers are the active and subjective elements in the development of productive forces. By utilizing labor tools to transform labor objects, cultivating a high-quality workforce can further enhance the efficiency of new-quality productive forces, thereby enabling them to play a more significant role in promoting high-quality development at the county level. This includes cultivating workers' digital literacy and optimizing the training environment. The upgrading of workers as the primary element points to the cultivation of high-quality talent who can fully utilize information technology and possess rapid knowledge iteration and comprehensive innovation capabilities^[7]. It is necessary to cultivate workers' digital literacy, continue to increase the popularization of digital literacy education, and cultivate and improve the digital literacy level of talent through diversified educational methods and means. Secondly, it is necessary to optimize the talent ecological environment. The talent ecological environment refers to the social and natural environment in which talent thrives and develops, encompassing various external factors that influence talent growth^[8]. To create a "first-tier city-like" soft environment for development, we will draw on the experience of Hangzhou Future Science and Technology City to build a comprehensive talent innovation and entrepreneurship service center within the county, integrating 15 targeted services such as technology transfer, children's education, and medical and health care. This will help solve the problem of the "brain drain" in the county and promote the integration of talent resources and the development of new productive forces.

6.3 Improve Policy Support Persistently

The government should play a service-oriented leadership role in the process of developing productive forces, ensuring

the efficient integration of production factors within new-quality productive forces, shortening the technology conversion cycle, and enabling new-quality productive forces to better support the high-quality development of county-level economies. The government should actively integrate the resources of "industry-enterprise-research institutes (universities)" to enable multiple R&D entities to jointly establish high-tech research institutes, strengthen the shared use of resources such as experimental platforms, concept verification, and computing power and data, and promote interactive cooperation between knowledge innovation entities and technological innovation entities on industry-academia-research collaboration platforms to create innovation hubs for new-quality productive forces. Additionally, efforts should be made to actively promote the internationalization of scientific and technological innovation achievements to enhance the international influence of county industries. We must vigorously support the establishment and operation of international institutions. Around the operational needs of the United Nations Innovation Center, we should provide efficient operational support, establish rapid response and management mechanisms, and strive to secure special preferential treatment. Through the establishment of international colleges and other forms, we should build international cooperation and exchange platforms and mechanisms, deepen exchanges and practical experience with overseas businesses and markets, and provide continuous business exchange and skill training support for companies going global.

Figure3 The path of New Quality Productive Forces to Empower the High-quality Development



Funding

Key Project of Graduate Education Reform at Zhejiang University of Technology: Research on the Optimization Path of Integrating Zhejiang Red Culture into Graduate Art Education under the Background of Great Ideological and Political Education” (No. 2024209)

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Reference

- [1] Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Further Deepening Reforms and Advancing Chinese-Style Modernization, (2024-07-22). People's Daily, 001. doi:10.28655/n.cnki.nrmrb.2024.007770.
- [2] Yan Y., Li W., & Yujia L., et al.(2023). China's Economic Growth: The “Dual-Dimensional Drive” of Data Factors. Statistical Research, 40(4), 3-18.
- [3] Fan G. (2023). “The Logical Basis, Multidimensional Connotations, and Contemporary Significance of ‘New Quality Productivity.’” Journal of Political Economy, 14(6), 127-145.
- [4] Wen Z., Lingyun X. (2023). On New Quality Productivity: Connotative Characteristics and Key Focus Areas. Reform, (10), 1-13.

- [5] Zheng X., Linhao Z., & Mengyao C. (2023). The intrinsic logic and practical considerations of empowering high-quality development with new-quality productive forces. *Contemporary Economic Research*, (11), 51-58
- [6] Tongfang L. (2024). Understanding New Quality Productivity from a Materialist Historical Perspective. *Research on Marxist Theory Discipline*, 10(4), 27-36.
- [7] Shun W.(2004). Research on the Comprehensive Evaluation Index System for Urban Talent Environment in China.*China Soft Science*, (3), 148-151.
- [8] Liu, Y., & He, Z. (2024). Synergistic industrial agglomeration, new quality productive forces and high-quality development of the manufacturing industry. *International Review of Economics & Finance*, 94, 103373.

The Zeitgeist of Longyuan: The Simple and Honest Colors of Gansu Oil Paintings Selected for The 14th National Exhibition of Fine Arts

Xuanmin Yue*

Northwest Normal University, Lanzhou, Gansu, 730070, China

*Corresponding author: Xuanmin Yue

Copyright: 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY-NC 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited, and explicitly prohibiting its use for commercial purposes.

Abstract: “The 14th National Exhibition of Fine Arts Oil Painting Exhibition” Gansu selected fourteen pieces of oil paintings. Over the past five years, Gansu oil painters have firmly grasped the pulse of the new era, focusing on capturing the humanistic concern and scanning the reality of people’s livelihood at the present time, and highlighting the spirit of the nation while embodying the aesthetic orientation of truth, goodness and beauty. This paper takes the current art exhibition of Gansu oil paintings as the vision, discusses the new changes of Gansu oil paintings in the new period, which not only shows that Gansu oil painters are based on Longyuan plateau land, promote the sense of responsibility and mission of Chinese excellent traditional culture in artistic creation. But also presents the simple color of Gansu oil paintings, expresses the development of the society and the historical changes in the language of oil paintings, and shapes the social life, political culture and people’s image of Gansu in the new period, building up a unique Longyuan zeitgeist.

Keywords: The 14th National Exhibition of Fine Arts; Oil Painting; Gansu; Zeitgeist

Published: Jun 16, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i2.424>

1.Introduction

Western oil painting has been closely connected with the pulse of the times since its inception. Today, the development of oil painting in China is guided by national culture and has gradually formed a development model with Chinese characteristics under the influence of the spirit of the times and continuous exploration of localization and nationalization. It has become a mainstream bearer of shaping and conveying the spiritual life of the people. The National Art Exhibition, as a high-standard artistic creation platform, has showcased numerous outstanding and influential oil paintings over the years, serving as a means for artists to express their genuine feelings and for people to reflect on historical culture. On July 18, 2024, the “Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Founding of the People’s Republic of China - The 14th National Art Exhibition of Oil Paintings” has opened at the Shanghai Art Museum, featuring a total of 697 oil paintings^[1], among which 14 from Gansu are selected, and 1 is sent to Beijing. Gansu artists focus on expressing the era and national spirit, concentrating on capturing contemporary humanitarian concerns and scanning real-life issues, showcasing the rustic colors of selected oil paintings from Gansu, providing a glimpse into the current state and evolution of oil painting in Gansu today^[2].

The selected oil paintings from Gansu for the National Art Exhibition went through a rigorous preliminary and re-evaluation process, standing out among numerous works from the province. The artists’ exquisite oil painting techniques and delicate

emotional expressions captivate viewers, leaving a profound and positive impression of the selected works. In fact, the 14th National Art Exhibition requires that creations respond to the themes of the times, always grounded in the fertile soil of outstanding Chinese traditional culture, adhering to cultural confidence, highlighting the spirit of innovation, and establishing a development path that promotes the “main theme while advocating diversity.”^[3] It aims to produce an exhibition with a clear stance and attitude. However, alongside its high standards, the National Art Exhibition also presents contemporary oil painters with the challenging task of reflecting the essential characteristics of the era^[4]. In this context, Gansu oil painters, through their works showcasing simple colors, earnestly capture the new lives and flourishing new era of the Gansu people. Additionally, the ability to transform real scene images into the artistic form of oil painting during creation reflects the artists’ mastery of the language of oil painting. For instance, the selected oil paintings from Gansu in this exhibition display fragmented portrayals of the simple lives of the populace, the localization conversion of heterogeneous cultural languages, and personalized explorations of the pictorial qualities of oil painting language.

2. Fragmented Direct Portrayals of the Simple Lives of the Populace

The 14th National Art Exhibition advocates for further strengthening its roots in life and for upholding integrity and innovation, featuring “people-oriented”, “contemporary”, and “exploratory” as overall characteristics^[5]. Artists are urged to engage with the contemporary scene, extracting materials, refining forms, and shaping images from it. The results of their creations should resonate with the times, possessing profound cultural forms and substantial ideological consciousness. Therefore, adhering to a people-oriented approach in artistic creation is necessarily a form of realist language, which not only objectively reflects societal development and the lives of the people but should also be a creative form that is favored and easily accepted by the masses. Each National Art Exhibition has evidently become a milestone for the exploration and advancement of modern art, where historical culture and current livelihoods are often the focal points of representation, and this edition is no exception.

Figure 1: Jiao Quan, *Five Flavors Enter the River, Noodles Fragrance Arises Series-18*, oil painting, 130cm x 180cm, 2024



Figure 2: Guo Jinyu, *Jianji River Market in Tianshui*, oil painting, 110cm x 170cm, 2024



Figure 3: Feng Bingchao, *Snack Street in Yangguan Town, Lixian County, Gansu Province*, oil painting, 150cm x 150cm, 2024



Figure 4: Cai Xiaobin, *In February of the Chengji, Joyous Events Filled Household*, oil painting, 117cm x 180cm, 2024



This year's art exhibition anticipates the emergence of high-quality new classic works that embody the character of the new era. The reflection of the real-life conditions of the people's simple life is undoubtedly the best subject matter for the visual presentation of the characteristics of the times. The oil paintings selected from Gansu vividly depict the liveliness and authenticity of people's lives, even capturing some unremarkable details and images. For instance, Jiao Quan's *Five Flavors Enter the River, Noodles Fragrance Arises Series·18* (Figure 1) portrays a fragrant aroma of beef noodles permeating every street and alley in Lanzhou, a dish that embodies the wisdom and hard work of countless individuals and contains profound regional culture. While experiencing the craftsmanship spirit of the people of Lanzhou, one also appreciates their both bold and delicate character; the busy chefs and the rising steam symbolize the taste and warmth of life, representing a sense of sentiment and connection. Guo Jinyu's *Jianji River Market in Tianshui* (Figure 2) focuses on the current state of people's lives, created with feelings inspired by the happiest and most genuine settings. The painting depicts one of the liveliest markets in Tianshui, showcasing the prosperous scenes at different times in the market. These perspectives depict the happy yet simple lives of Tianshui's residents, representing moments of joy from the artist's memories. Feng Bingchao's *Snack Street in Yangguan Town, Lixian County, Gansu Province* (Figure 3) and Cai Xiaobin's *In February of the Chengji, Joyous Events Filled Household* (Figure 4) display the artists' unique observational styles and genuine emotions in depicting the most

familiar people and objects, expressing their insights into the life around them through oil painting and highlighting these ordinary yet special scenarios. These works reflect the happy and optimistic, simple lives of the people, and the perceptible local themes in the imagery express the artists' praise and nostalgia for rural life. The paintings utilize a direct expressive technique, allowing the creators to enjoy the playful nature of oil paint and the pleasure of composing the scene while exploring the infinite possibilities of oil painting language, all while showcasing the spirit of our times.

The ordinary scenes and figures depicted by the painter are fragmented representations of social reality and the simple lives of common people. These seemingly mundane daily moments profoundly reflect the essential characteristics of the era and serve as the best evidence for the subtle changes in people's cultural concepts and lifestyles. The artwork highlights the rich and profound regional cultural and artistic features of the Longyuan land through various presentation methods.

3. Localization Conversion of Heterogeneous Cultural Languages

Originating from Europe, oil painting, as a language of heterogeneous culture, has developed a mature system. The challenge lies in how to transform oil painting into a localized aesthetic presentation within the modern art field, integrating it into the contemporary Chinese oil painting framework. This process represents the conversion and expression of heterogeneous cultural language in a localized context, which is reflected both in the depiction of China's cultural landscape and historical heritage using oil painting language, and in the fusion and permeation of the Chinese expressive aesthetic within the oil painting language^[6]. This cross-cultural enhancement of the foreign oil painting language embodies the modern creativity of Chinese oil painters, who combine it with Chinese culture and humanistic spirit, carrying the emotional expression and spiritual aspirations of the Chinese nation. Consequently, it forms a new aesthetic quality with Eastern characteristics. The exploration by Gansu oil painters regarding the localization of this heterogeneous cultural language in oil painting profoundly illustrates the unique modern creative power arising from the integration of regional cultures.

Chinese oil painting, while absorbing nourishment from diverse art forms, also faces impacts from various artistic expressions. For instance, the purity of oil painting has been challenged by the instantaneous nature of images, leading to the replacement and overshadowing of the color and form of oil painting by real visual images, which in turn gradually dissolves the unique language system of oil painting. However, the recognition of the uniqueness of the oil painting language by painters has become the reason for their study and exploration of Western oil painting traditions. The language of oil painting, which approaches reality like images, does not equate to the reproduction of real scenes. Instead, it often stems from the artist's enthusiastic depiction of reality, striving to express the true essence of the subject. Therefore, the ability of artists to convert real images into localized oil painting textures that approximate reality using the heterogeneous language of oil painting relies on their fundamental and critical understanding of the oil painting language.

For example, Chen Weiguo's *A Lifetime of Protection* (Figure 5) employs a compressed, surrounding composition, placing the great image of Mr. Chang Shuhong alongside the grand scene of Digital Dunhuang, applying panoramic replication in artistic creation. The digital preservation and transmission of Dunhuang culture carries contemporary significance. The choice of colors is inspired by the common Dunhuang sandy yellow of the Hexi Corridor, along with sandstone red and black, as well as vibrant greens and blues drawn from Dunhuang murals, forming a unique Chinese color palette. The whole picture exhibits an unexpected harmony from form to content, and when combined with the symmetrical structure of the Dunhuang caves, it creates a comprehensive visual layout that allows us to understand Dunhuang in all aspects and appreciate the spirit of Dunhuang. Zhang Gang's *Series of Songs from the Longyuan Plateau·New Spring Festival on the Plateau* (Figure 6) depicts the social fire performances in the Longdong region of Northwest China. The artist attempts to convey the unique cultural significance and human spirit of local folklore using a new language of oil painting, adopting texture and flat painting techniques in its formal language, with exaggerated transformations in character modeling, giving the work a rustic aesthetic characteristic and distinctive regionality, highlighting a new visual image in the new era. Guo Shuze's *The Gentle Wind Blows Westward*, Volume Nine (Figure 7) draws on scenes from the local livestock market in his hometown, where the parties negotiate prices through a specific "sleeve tube" method, forming a unique regional culture. The painting language chosen for this work adopts a flat approach, reducing direct representations of material images in form, instead presenting the mystery of this folk culture through simple color blocks and shapes in both visual and temporal dimensions.

Figure 5: Chen Weiguo, *A Lifetime of Protection*, oil painting, 150cm x 235cm, 2024

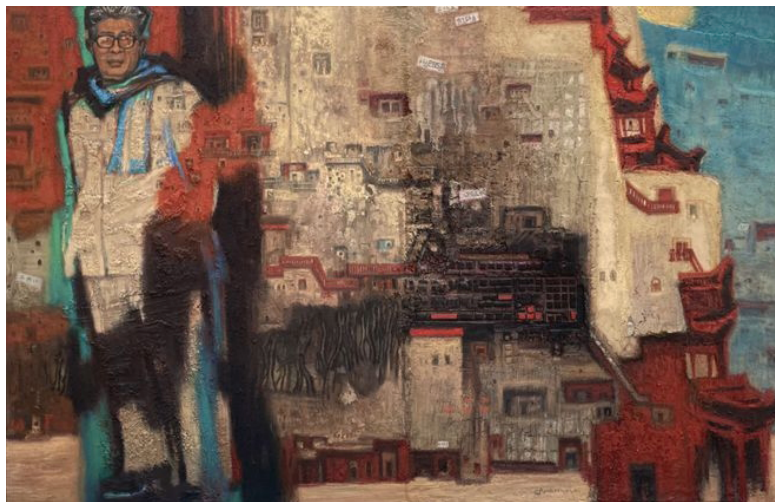


Figure 6: Zhang Gang, *Series of Songs from the Longyuan Plateau-New Spring Festival on the Plateau*, oil painting, 200cm x 160cm, 2024

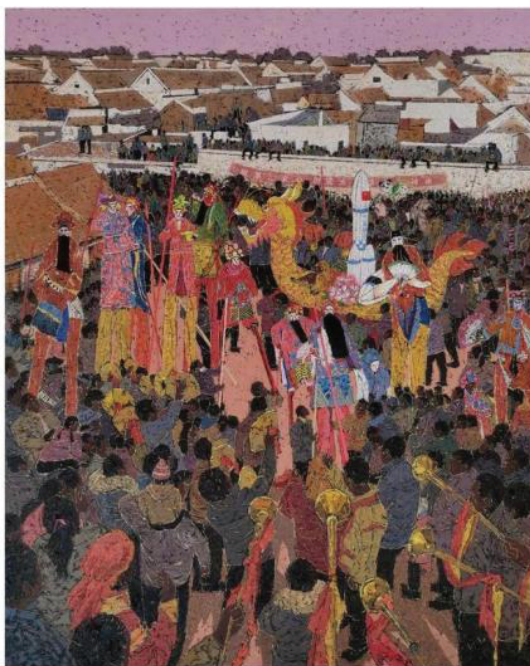


Figure 7: Guo Shuze, *The Gentle Wind Blows Westward*, Volume Nine, oil painting, 130cm x 180cm, 2024



Figure 8: Zhang Xiyuan, *Harmonious Spring Warmth, Rain Moistens the Dry Plateau*, oil painting, 158cm x 230cm, 2024



The oil paintings from Gansu depict the landscape of the Loess Plateau, such as Zhang Xiyuan's *Harmonious Spring Warmth, Rain Moistens the Dry Plateau*, oil painting (Figure 8). This work is based on the artist's hometown of the Loess Plateau, where the painter draws from personal life experiences. Through continuous sketching, the artist has sought to explore a regional oil painting language that can express the geographical features of the Loess Plateau. This exploration, under the fusion of Chinese and Western styles, has gradually formed a unique aesthetic orientation. The painting presents a rich and simple, serene yet profound atmosphere of the Loess Plateau, reflecting the hardworking and unadorned spirit of its people, infusing the barren land with abundant hope and vitality. Ma Aibing's *Building Dreams in Longyuan* (Figure 9) selects the context of the under-construction Longzhang Expressway, using the grand mountains and rivers of the Loess Plateau as the backdrop to showcase the rapid development achievements of Gansu. Although the scene appears chaotic with construction sites, it is unified under the interplay of sunlight and shadow. The figurative expressions are depicted through abstract brushstrokes, vividly portraying the grand momentum of the new era on the Loess Plateau. The overall color scheme employs warm tones; to enhance the atmosphere, the originally blue mesh fabric is changed to red, presenting a vibrant developmental vigor characterized by prosperity and growth, while attempting to emphasize the abstract expression of oil painting language within a realistic figurative scene.

It is evident that Gansu painters express the regional culture of China through the language of Western oil painting. By interpreting and understanding the oil painting language in diverse ways, they achieve a subtle transformation and re-creation of heterogeneous cultural languages. Some painters employ exaggeration and reconstruction of forms, infusing their works with subjective emotions, thereby generating artistic connotations and expressions that embody Eastern aesthetics. Other painters strive to break away from existing normative forms, using abstract symbols to transcend traditional cultural concepts and represent concrete visual images, enhancing the visual impact of the artwork and creating a new quality of oil painting aesthetics that is distinctly regional.

Figure 9: Ma Aibing, *Building Dreams in Longyuan*, oil painting, 130cm x 180cm, 2024



Figure 10: Wang Jingjing, *Migration*, oil painting, 150cm x 150cm, 2024



4. Personalized Explorations of the Pictorial Qualities of Oil Painting Language

From the selected oil paintings from Gansu, it can be seen that the level of oil painting art creation in Gansu has significantly improved, mainly reflected in the changes and return to creative methods, moving out of the studio and immersing in life, rather than simply creating art in a photographic state. This is a creative concept that oil painters have consistently emphasized. However, regardless of the approach, the current age of imagery is an unavoidable trend for oil painters, and completely rejecting visual imagery seems unrealistic. The key lies in how to excavate the thematic significance behind images, creating flat visual texts that transcend imagery through personalized exploration of the pictorial language of oil painting. When viewed from a positive perspective, it is evident that images provide artists with such rich and wonderful visual moments. Therefore, the main issue facing contemporary oil painting is how to balance the relationship between photographic imagery and the pictorial language of oil painting, emphasizing the formal language and narrative techniques of artistic creation.

The exhibition focuses on themes related to the everyday lives of ordinary people, particularly in the portrayal of ethnic figures, showcasing the changes in time and regional highlights of Gansu art. These works reflect the aspirations of ethnic minority communities who strive to create a better life through hard work. For example, Wang Jingjing's *Migration* (Figure 10) depicts the simple life of Tibetan herders, expressing a genuine and authentic significance of life, imbued with an optimistic and open-minded spirit. The artwork employs a method of scattered perspective, incorporating elements of traditional Chinese painting and mural techniques, resulting in an overall sense of weight in the composition. The color palette is dominated by unified gray tones, intertwined with lines of Chinese calligraphy, creating a rhythm and cadence of speed, pauses, light, and heaviness that enhances the dynamic quality of the piece, as well as the pictoriality of oil painting. This expresses the artist's contemplation on the individual value of life. The artists present ethnic spirit through realistic language, allowing the visuals to exhibit a rational and rigorous sense of representation. The content is nuanced and profound, capturing fleeting moments through image technology, effectively freezing dynamic instances into eternity. This guides the viewer's gaze into depth, as seen in Wang Xin's *Dan Zhu's Holiday Lunch* (Figure 11), which portrays the real lives of Tibetan people. The realistic imagery "re-presents" the narrative perception of the new life in the Tibetan region, and through "the nationalization of oil painting," it expresses a heartfelt admiration for the vast and profound beauty of the natural and cultural heritage in the West. Throughout the creative process, the interplay of compositional space and emotional color treatment allows for a coexistence of the figurative and abstract, producing a strong visual impact and imaginative space within the spiritual realm, all in pursuit of the essence of contemporaneity, expressing the most sincere and pure emotional longings from deep within.

Some works utilize the language of oil painting to discover the beauty of details in the ordinary world. Rather than directly depicting high-definition photographs, they delve into the act of observing images through sketching, expressing a positive attitude and values towards the era, thus providing a distinct visual experience filled with emotional care in the age of images

[7]. Zhang Wenping's *The high-speed rail entering Tibet* (Figure 12) portrays a high-speed train entering the snowy plateau, with a group of Tibetan people standing at a high point witnessing this historic moment. Their backs resemble vibrant stories brimming with hope, collectively painting a beautiful new blueprint for the Tibetan region using the language of oil painting. The artwork intentionally subjectively modifies imagery during its creation, reflecting the artist's personalized pursuit. The painterly visual space of oil painting brings the scene into an emotional expression on a spiritual level, achieving a more vivid and thrilling impact than that of photographic images. Zhang Guofeng's *Intangible Cultural Heritage - Tajik Sheep Grabbing* (Figure 13) depicts the scene of the Tajik goat-dragging game with skilled oil painting techniques. As an intangible cultural heritage project, goat-dragging embodies the passionate beauty of strength and courage. It is a form of cultural preservation and transmission. By capturing this dynamic beauty in oil painting, the work represents a genuine reproduction and artistic expression of the lives and traditional culture of the Tajik people. The completion of such a dynamic composition, while inevitably based on reference photographs, is commendable. The artist uses the form of photos yet transcends their limitations, integrating their understanding of the work's concept into the imagery. The artwork achieves a balance between firm and loose brushwork, and rich and minimalist forms, complemented by composition design and color application, resulting in a true restoration of the intense goat-dragging scene, embodying the essence of oil painting in form and meaning.

Figure 11: Wang Xin, Dan Zhu's Holiday Lunch, oil painting, 160cm x 150cm, 2024



Figure 12: Zhang Wenping, The high-speed rail entering Tibet, oil painting, 200cm x 138cm, 2024



Figure 13: Zhang Guofeng, *Intangible Cultural Heritage - Tajik Sheep Grabbing*, oil painting, 170cm x 230cm, 2024



Figure 14: Li Yuqi, *The World of Glass 2*, oil painting, 200cm x 160cm, 2024



Gansu's young artists exhibit vibrant creativity and passion in this exhibition, constructing distinctive and innovative oil paintings through imaginative conceptual perspectives and exploratory cross-cultural viewpoints. Li Yuqi's *The World of Glass 2* (Figure 14) aims to express how today's youth resist external pressures, daring to break free from constraints and establish a tranquil inner world amidst the torrents of the times, showcasing the spiritual demeanor of contemporary youth. The painting predominantly features gray tones, with dramatic natural light on the right side, imparting an unusual tranquility to the entire scene. The figures examine their past and present from an observational perspective, merging with the background stage, crows, and the concept of a painting within a painting to create a tangible expression of the characters' inner worlds. The artist sensitively captures the real sensations and meaningful communication of visual imagery, allowing viewers to find emotional expressions and spiritual appeals that resonate within the artwork.

It is evident that the oil paintings selected in this session from Gansu exhibit a significant highlight, prominently showcasing the painterly nature of oil painting. This reveals Gansu artists' deeper understanding and transformation of the concept of localization in the language of oil painting from aspects such as thought and personality. The development moves toward a diverse range of expressive techniques and a higher level of technical skill in the intrinsic art of oil painting. When faced with the pros and cons brought about by imagery, the artists strive to break free from template-driven, formulaic rigidity, present-

ing a pure, profound, and innovative oil painting art. Grounded in tradition yet keeping pace with the times, their ability to grasp, understand, and recreate photographic images has qualitatively improved. They actively avoid the mere replication of photographic realism and utilize the effect of freezing moments captured in photographs, deeply exploring the richness and ripples of characters' inner worlds. This constructs an emotional resonance that provokes deep contemplation among viewers, propelling artists to articulate expressions in real contexts that fulfill the intrinsic language of oil painting, thus producing works that transcend the "realism" of images.

5.The artistic value and contemporary significance of selected oil paintings from Gansu Province

Today, the absorption and permeation of oil painting within our country's excellent traditional culture are primarily guided by subject matter that can highlight the core socialist values, focus on social well-being, and express the spirit of the times and the nation. In terms of formal expression, it shows a diverse appearance and an oil painting language based on national aesthetic habits, forming a language form rich in national meaning and cultural symbols, emphasizing the confidence in the path of oil painting development in China, as well as in its theory and system. It can be said that in this era of cross-cultural information integration, and after five years of accumulation, the selected oil paintings from Gansu strive to absorb the nutrients of different cultures. Gansu oil painters increasingly emphasize the diversity of ideas, concepts, subjects, and methods in their oil painting creation, seriously considering the ideological connotations they carry as well as the unique aesthetics of the nation. They have become clearer in exploring issues related to the nationalization and localization of oil painting, presenting regional characteristics, authentic expression, and symbolic metaphors in their aesthetic sentiments, returning to the essence of Chinese culture, and showcasing unique artistic languages and distinct creative styles.

The National Fine Arts Exhibition has gone through thirteen sessions. In terms of its artistic development, the subjects of the works often represent significant historical events or real-life figures, attempting to achieve an emotional resonance with the audience. In this exhibition, the oil paintings feature diverse subjects and varied techniques, aiming to provide a dual sense of visual and emotional satisfaction through narrative, expression, and atmosphere. They offer a culturally refined joy through the interpretation of oil painting language, capturing a delightful essence that reflects both enlightenment and ease, infused with a spirit of the times^[8]. From the works selected from Gansu, one can clearly feel that the pieces place greater emphasis on the authenticity of narrative content, the vividness of characters' expressions, the accuracy of forms, and the intricacies of atmospheric rendering. The creative styles exhibit a more personalized approach, presenting different experiential patterns. Artists deeply taste the nuances of oil painting language, which significantly enhances its expressive qualities. This localized artistic form displays clear regional differences and reflects Gansu's independent original thoughts in terms of subject matter, composition, and modeling. The resulting works of national significance resonate deeply with viewers and embody profound artistic value, carrying the significance of cultural heritage and the promotion of the spirit of the times^[9].

Artists should adhere to their artistic individuality, using expressive language to showcase a vibrant spirit and present authentic depictions of life. They should reconstruct the language system of oil painting through the historical and cultural perspective of the Chinese nation, establishing a mature, healthy artistic style that embodies the spirit of the new era. This is the correct direction and development path for Gansu oil painters to pursue their relentless efforts. Undoubtedly, although the ecological landscape of oil painting is changing under the influence of globalized new media art, national art exhibitions remain pure forms of art, serving to promote the progress and development of Chinese art. As Gansu oil painters continually update their creative concepts and broaden their artistic horizons along with the ongoing cultural changes in society, the diversity in oil painting creation contributes positively to improving the level of oil painting works selected from Gansu. Furthermore, it is evident from these works that the straightforward and earnest artistic attitude of Gansu artists is widely recognized, and it is heartening to see the younger generation of oil painters taking up the baton from their predecessors, fully reflecting the prosperity and enduring cultural traditions of Gansu oil painting in the new era^[10].

6.Conclusion

The oil paintings selected from Gansu for the 14th National Art Exhibition demonstrate a diversified and innovative

development model. These works showcase exceptional painting skills and a rigorous foundation in realism, reflecting a vivid contemporary style and focusing on the lives of people in the countryside through a unique perspective, all while exploring a poetic language of oil painting. Art itself should be a pure form of activity that follows the heart, conveys emotions, and learns from nature. The oil paintings presented in this exhibition infuse the subjective emotions and artistic spirit of the creators, conveying Gansu's prosperous culture, national rejuvenation, and happiness through a more intense and direct visual impact and philosophical significance. They exhibit an unusual artistic rhythm and appeal, resonating with viewers' psychology and emotions, aligning with the true essence of art that comes from the heart.

Gansu, as a pivotal region of the ancient Silk Road, possesses a rich historical and cultural heritage. Gansu oil painters should continue to base their work on the land of Longyuan, exploring the creation of new and vibrant Gansu oil painting art. The path to beauty has no shortcuts, nor does it have a fixed route; it can only be pursued tirelessly in a vast expanse by generations of oil painters, who must always recognize their cultural responsibilities and strive to create masterpieces that resonate with social development and the spirit of the times. It is worth believing that Gansu oil painters are gradually breaking free from the imitation of Western oil painting and are returning to attempts at integrating Chinese culture and modern civilization. It is believed that Gansu's oil painting art will usher in a flourishing scene of outstanding works and a diversity of creations. Through this exhibition, Gansu oil painters are further encouraged to adopt a more dynamic stance, producing more artistically significant works that uniquely reflect the Northwest style and meet the aesthetic needs and aspirations for a better life of the people.

Funding

no

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Reference

- [1] Jin, H.: The Oil Painting Exhibition of the 14th National Exhibition of Fine Arts Held in Shanghai. *Art Magazine*, 2024, 10, 6-7.
- [2] Ma, G.: A Retrospective of the History of Gansu Art and Contemporary Examination. *Western Literature and Art Studies*, 2022, 01, 101-106.
- [3] Zeng, X.-F.: The National Exhibition of Fine Arts and the "Overarching Theme" and "Diversified" Development Path of Chinese oil painting. *Art Magazine*, 2024, 11, 24-31.
- [4] Zeng, X.-F.: Thematic Fine Arts, National Projects, and the Character of Oil Paintings in the New Era National Art Exhibition. *Art Research*, 2024, 05, 102-109.
- [5] Zhao, M.: Focusing on the people, singing the praises of the era, exploring diversity. *China Art Newspaper*, 2024-08-05, 004.
- [6] Feng, Z.-G.: Cultural Subject and Language Essence—Reflections on the Subjectivity Construction of Chinese Oil Painting in the New Era. *Art Journal*, 2024, 06, 150-154.
- [7] Tang, Y.-M.: Can an oil painting exhibition dominated by realism avoid the tendency toward photographic representation? *Art Newspaper*, 2024-08-17, 004.
- [8] Zheng, G.: The "Expressions" of Oil Painting: Commentary on the Oil Painting Exhibition of the 14th National Exhibition of Fine Arts. *Art Magazine*, 2024, 10, 24-28.
- [9] Wang, P.-P.: A Study on the Evolution of Regional Art Creation Forms and Styles from a Spatial Perspective: A Case Study of Revolutionary Historical Paintings in Gansu since the Founding of New China. *Western Literature and Art Studies*, 2024, 03, 97-102.
- [10] Yu, Y.: The National Art Exhibition Featuring the Emergence of New Talents. *Art Newspaper*, 2024-08-03, 004.

Dear Researchers and Scholars :

Greetings from Asia Pacific Science Press, a beacon of academic and scientific publishing, located in the vibrant city of Hong Kong.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude for your relentless pursuit of knowledge, and your significant contributions to the advancement of science and society. It is researchers and scholars like you who propel humanity forward, and we at the Asia Pacific Science Press are devoted to ensuring that your groundbreaking works receive the global recognition they rightfully deserve.

In light of our commitment to disseminating pioneering research across various disciplines, such as medicine, architecture, education, and electronics, we are reaching out with two pivotal opportunities to augment our collaboration with the global academic community:

Call for Paper Submissions:

We cordially invite you to submit your original research articles to our fast-growing, peer-reviewed, and open-access journals. Our platform guarantees an extensive, global reach, enabling your work to garner maximum visibility and citation in the academic sphere. Rest assured, your work will be meticulously assessed by experts in the field, ensuring it receives the acknowledgment and exposure it merits.

Join Our Esteemed Team:

We are fervently searching for passionate researchers and scholars interested in joining our burgeoning team at Asia Pacific Science Press. We offer numerous roles, such as peer reviewers, editors, and advisory board members, where your expertise will significantly shape the content and quality of our publications. In return, you will gain invaluable experience, network with preeminent scholars, and play a pivotal role in molding the future of global academic publishing.

Why Choose Asia Pacific Science Press?

Global Reach: Your work will be accessible to a worldwide audience, free from any access barriers.

Collaboration with Renowned Universities: We have established extensive publishing systems in cooperation with world-renowned universities, such as Wuhan University, Hong Kong University, and the University of Malaya.

Diverse Disciplines: Your research will be housed among numerous journals across a multitude of academic projects and disciplines.

As we stride forward in the academic landscape, we envision a future where our collective efforts shape a more enlightened, innovative, and interconnected global society. We sincerely hope that you consider this invitation to join us on this auspicious journey towards knowledge, discovery, and global impact.

Should you wish to submit your work or express interest in joining our team, please do not hesitate to contact us. You can submit your manuscript or personal profile to info@apspublisher.com or visit our website at www.apspublisher.com for more information.

Thank you for considering this opportunity, and we eagerly anticipate the possibility of welcoming you to the Asia Pacific Science Press family. Together, let's forge a future of unparalleled scientific advancement and discovery.

Warm regards
Asia Pacific Science Press

OUR JOURNALS

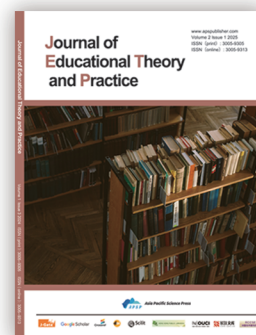
Asia Pacific Economic and Management Review is an international, peer-reviewed and open access journal which focuses on theoretical and applied studies of corporate and financial behavior. Aiming to promote the research in fields of business economics and management, it covers mainly but not limits to the following areas: accounting and financial management, economics, human resource management and organizational behavior, information management, international business, strategy and innovation, management science and operations management, marketing and retailing, finance.



Critical Humanistic Social Theory is an journal that publishes papers specifically using quantitative or qualitative research methods for social science research. The journal encourages scholars to conduct social science theory research from the perspective of social critical theory and emphasizes research concerned with issues or methods that cut across traditional disciplinary lines.



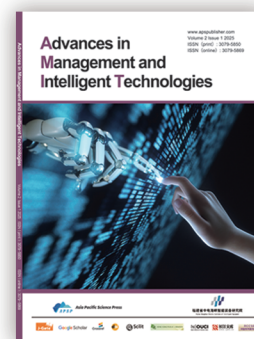
Journal of Educational Theory and Practice is an international, peer-reviewed and open access journal which is to promote the evaluative, integrative, theoretical and methodological research on contemporary education; shape a novel, broader view of issues in contemporary education; enhance the caliber of humanities research through active use of best domestic and foreign practices; and integrate the achievements of various sciences and knowledge areas with unconventional approaches.



Journal of Advances in Engineering and Technology is an international, peer-reviewed and open access journal which publishes original articles, reviews, short communications, case studies and letters in the field of electronic research and application.



Advances in Management and Intelligent Technologies is an international, peer-reviewed, open-access academic journal, hosted by the Fujian Strait Institute of Intelligent Equipment and managed and published by Asia-Pacific Science Press. It focuses on the latest research in the fields of management and intelligent technologies, and aims to advance both theoretical and applied research in management, technological innovation, and intelligent development.



Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Medical Research is an international, peer-reviewed, open access journal dedicated to advancing clinical medical research across multiple disciplines. The journal serves as a platform for publishing high-quality original research, reviews, and clinical studies that enhance the understanding of medical practices, treatment innovations, and healthcare outcomes, thereby supporting patient care and medical advancements in the Asia Pacific region and beyond.



Asia Pacific Journal of Educational Research is an international, peer-reviewed, open-access academic journal focusing on educational theory and practice. It publishes high-quality research on educational reform, teaching methods, educational equity, and policy studies. The journal addresses practical needs and institutional changes in the education systems of the Asia-Pacific region, advocating a balance between theoretical inquiry and practical experience. It encourages original studies from multicultural, comparative, and interdisciplinary perspectives, aiming to support educational innovation and policy development across the region.



Asia Pacific Economic and Social Development is an international, peer-reviewed, open-access academic journal openly distributed to the global academic community. The journal is committed to publishing original research with theoretical depth and practical value in the fields of economic and social development. It focuses on issues such as economic behavior, social structure transformation, policy innovation, and regional coordinated development in the Asia-Pacific region. The journal encourages interdisciplinary perspectives and promotes the integration of economics, sociology, management, and related disciplines.

