

Learning From Examples: Global Cultural Industry Research Report on Inheritance and Innovation of Intangible Cultural Heritage Skills in Jingdezhen

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Abstract:

As a vital component of China's traditional culture and craftsmanship, Jingdezhen ceramics are encountering both significant opportunities and challenges in the face of globalization and industrialization. The question of how to ensure the inheritance and innovation of Jingdezhen ceramics has emerged as a key issue in global cultural industry research. In this context, this study aims to analyze the opportunities and challenges confronting China's traditional intangible cultural heritage and explore how these heritage techniques can address the current dilemmas. The goal is to provide insights and examples for the preservation of intangible cultural heritage worldwide. Furthermore, the significance of this study lies in the fact that culture, as a fundamental aspect of human societal development, carries a unique and profound spiritual identity. This identity helps shape the thoughts of a nation or country and serves as a marker of collective identity. Therefore, preserving cultural heritage is crucial for maintaining historical continuity, fostering cultural confidence, safeguarding cultural diversity, and passing on the spiritual wealth of humanity. Through a combination of literature review and field investigation, this study reveals that while the transmission of intangible cultural heritage skills in Jingdezhen faces substantial challenges, the virtuous cycle created by the integration of culture and industry offers promising potential for both the preservation and innovation of these traditions.

Keywords: Global Cultural Industry; Intangible Cultural Heritage; Cultural inheritance and Innovation; Jingdezhen Ceramic; Intangible Cultural Transmission.

1. Introduction

As an integral part of human society's evolution, culture serves as a unique and profound spiritual symbol, embodying the essence of a nation or country and representing its identity. Its existence is essential for maintaining cultural diversity, encouraging contacts and reciprocal learning between civilizations, building cultural self-confidence, and maintaining historical continuity. As a result, it is critical to assess the difficulties facing intangible cultural heritage techniques today and in the future. As a shining example of intangible cultural heritage, Jingdezhen ceramics show how commercialization and industrialization may revitalize traditional traditions while also highlighting the critical role that culture plays in society progress. While Jingdezhen ceramics are gradually being protected, incorporating innovation into this process is still quite difficult. While much research has focused on the preservation efforts, current situation, and development recommendations for the inheritors of Jingdezhen's ceramic heritage, further exploration is needed to understand how to create a sustainable cycle of industrial development based on this heritage. In light of this, the study is to investigate in greater detail the situation, obstacles, and challenges that face intangible cultural heritage techniques in the present. In the end, it will explore the future direction of China's intangible cultural heritage in order to better establish and develop it in contemporary society.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Current Research about the Challenges of Jingdezhen Ceramics Industry

Research on the non-genetic inheritance in Jingdezhen primarily focuses on promoting the spirit of artisans, preserving the traditional essence of Chinese civilization, and exploring effective models for non-genetic inheritance [1]. There has been some success in protecting non-genetic inheritors of intangible cultural heritage in China, nearly two decades after the concept was first proposed. Field research that is based on the routines and daily activities of these artists is still lacking in the academic world, albeit [2].

In today's society, intangible cultural heritage faces challenges in gaining wider recognition due to various factors. First and foremost, a major problem is the small audience for intangible cultural heritage, which results in many traditional types of handicraft having less public recognition or appreciation and less exposure. Indeed, there has been progress in protecting non-genetic inheritors, or those who acquire skills and knowledge via experience

rather than formal schooling, but there are still gaps in our understanding of the daily lives and practices of these craftsmen. Although Jingdezhen has historically been known for its exquisite hand-crafted porcelain. However, in recent decades, there has been a surge in demand for mass-produced porcelain products, which are often manufactured more quickly and at a lower cost using industrial processes [3]. Due to its mass production's ability to sell teapots at a far lower price than traditional porcelain teapots made in Jingdezhen, buyers tend to favor less expensive options. This change affects craftspeople who depend on fine skill yet find it difficult to compete with less expensive, machine-made substitutes. Younger generations may be reluctant to preserve old practices if they don't see them as economically viable.

In addition, misalignment with mainstream culture presents challenges that in a fast-paced, globalized world, traditional crafts may not easily fit into modern lifestyles. While still valued for its artistic beauty and historical significance, Qinghua porcelain (blue and white porcelain) is not as widely demanded as it was in its heyday, especially during the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties [4]. Understanding the cultural and historical significance of traditional Jingdezhen ceramics is often necessary in order to appreciate them [4]. As societies modernize, there can be a shift away from traditional crafts towards products that are perceived as more practical or modern and many consumers may not have the time or interest to learn about the intricate history and techniques behind these ceramic in a fast-paced, globalized world, leading to a decline in the traditional craftsman skills and the number of artisans capable of producing high-quality Qinghua porcelain. As a result, traditional crafts can struggle to gain recognition and appreciation among a broader audience that might prioritize immediate aesthetic appeal over cultural depth. Besides, geographical constraints still play a significant role in shaping the exposure and development of traditional crafts like Jingdezhen ceramics. Jingdezhen, located in Jiangxi Province, China, has historically been a center for porcelain production due to its access to high-quality kaolin clay [5]. But because of its rather isolated location and the unique geographic features that surround it, shipping Jingdezhen ceramics to other parts of the country can become more expensive and logistically challenging. Porcelain can be more expensive and complicated when viewed from a more remote area because it is delicate and needs to be handled and packaged carefully. Furthermore, the local market in Jingdezhen is obviously not large enough to sustain the industry at a scale seen in past centuries, limiting the potential customer base residing in or visiting the region. What's even worse is that being geographically isolated can also impact the ability of local

artisans to engage with media and marketing channels that could increase their visibility on a national or global scale. Since economic development and investment tend to be concentrated in more accessible, economically vibrant areas, Jingdezhen might not attract the same level of public or private investment in infrastructure and promotional activities as more centrally located areas, which could further inhibit its growth.

2.2 The Future Perspective of Jingdezhen Ceramics Industry Development

Current academic research on the intangible cultural heritage of Jingdezhen ceramics primarily employs methods such as literature review, data analysis, and fieldwork in art anthropology, utilizing both secondary sources and firsthand information gathered through direct communication [6]. With the help of these methods, scholars are able to build a strong foundation for the knowledge and skills of Jingdezhen ceramics and obtain a thorough grasp of its non-genetic inheritance. These techniques do, however, have certain drawbacks [7]. This study is to focus on the inheritance as well as the creative use of Jingdezhen ceramics in light of the current trends in cultural heritage preservation. It looks at possible paths for this intangible cultural heritage's future development while also examining the difficulties it faces in the present day.. This research will delve into the difficulties posed by industrialization and globalization, such as the competition with mass-produced ceramic goods and the challenge of maintaining relevance in a rapidly changing world.

This research, through an extensive literature review and in-depth field investigations, will capture insights from practitioners who are actively confronting these challenges. The second model is "curvilinear model". One of the most-discussed topics in exploring the adjustment process over forty years is the U-shaped curve/U-curve model. Lysgaard first put forward the U-shaped curve in 1955, based on a study of 200 Norwegian Fulbright grantees who once studied in the US. According to the model, adjustment "is felt to be easy and successful to begin with; then follows a 'crisis' in which one feels less well adjusted, somewhat lonely and unhappy; finally one begins to feel better adjusted again, becoming more integrated into the foreign community [5]."It will suggest strategies that not only preserve traditional skills but also adapt them to contemporary needs and opportunities, ensuring the enduring vitality of this ancient craft in the modern era.

3. Research Method

Based on the background provided, this study conducted in-depth interviews with three graduates from Jingdezhen

Ceramic University in Jiangxi Province, all of who now are workers in the Jindezhen ceramics industry. The used interview technique is a qualitative research methodology that enables researchers and participants to engage in meaningful dialogue to examine and discuss particular topics. The need to learn more about the varying subjective experiences of people working in the Jingdezhen ceramics industry led to the preference for qualitative approaches over quantitative ones. The in-depth investigation of intricate phenomena that are challenging to measure but abundant in significance and relevance is made possible by qualitative research. A more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the social realities of participants can be obtained through qualitative methods as opposed to quantitative ones, which aim to quantify factors and generalize results across bigger populations [8]. Considering the characteristics of cultural industry and cultural studies where the richness of the data can reveal the layers of meaning that define a cultural artifact or practice, qualitative research methods enable researchers to gather deep insights into human thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, which are often missed by quantitative approaches. In the case of Jingdezhen ceramics, understanding the socio-economic, cultural, and historical context is essential for appreciating the nuances of its intangible cultural heritage [9]. What's more, since qualitative research is adaptive in nature, it would be easier for researchers to adjust their methods as they gather more data, allowing for a responsive approach that is often necessary when dealing with complex cultural issues, so as to gives a voice to the participants, allowing them to share their stories and perspectives in their own words, which is crucial for studies focusing on cultural heritage and practices. The application of qualitative techniques in historical research is supported by theoretical frameworks like grounded theory and phenomenology. Phenomenology is appropriate for comprehending the individual and collective importance of Jingdezhen ceramics since it centers on the lived experiences of individuals [10]. The application of grounded theory enables scholars to formulate hypotheses based on the evidence they gather, making it perfect for pinpointing and elucidating the fundamental mechanisms influencing the invention and legacy of Jingdezhen ceramics..

The primary focus of these interviews is the challenges facing the intangible cultural heritage of ceramics in Jingdezhen and how to foster its better inheritance and innovation. Current research tends to emphasize the difficulties and obstacles associated with intangible cultural heritage, often overlooking the analysis of its contemporary development within society. This gap significantly influences the future trajectory of intangible cultural heritage, making discussions around innovation and devel-

opment particularly important. The three interviewees are actively working in various sectors related to ceramics in Jingdezhen, each occupying unique roles that reflect the multifaceted nature of the region's ceramic culture and its diverse professional landscape.

4. Research Findings

Through a comprehensive literature review and field investigation, it was found that the inheritance work of Jingdezhen ceramic intangible cultural heritage is facing many challenges. Three respondents from the ceramics industry—Mr. Sun, Mr. Zhang, and Ms. Huang—offered insightful commentary on the invention and transmission of Jingdezhen's intangible cultural heritage. As the general manager of Tuofeng Group's Jinglan Project, Mr. Sun is primarily concerned with the industrialized production of Jingdezhen ceramics and the import and export of porcelain. He achieves this by replacing manual labor with machines, which significantly improves efficiency and quality while maintaining Jingdezhen's traditional ceramic production techniques. The importance of people as cultural bearers and the propagation of the spiritual worth found in ceramic culture are stressed by Mr. Zhang, a ceramic craftsman. Ms. Huang, whose occupation is creative porcelain, stresses the importance of design innovation, shape design, and adapting to social needs in order to ensure the survival and development of intangible cultural heritage in the contemporary society. In addition, based on the interviews with the three interviewees, some common and recurring difficulties faced by intangible cultural heritage were mentioned, including the rigid thinking of traditional craftsmen and inheritors, the lack of understanding of traditional culture by young beneficiaries, and the difficulty of combining traditional techniques with innovative trends, among others. Because of the intricate production procedures and methods used in the Jingdezhen ceramic industry—such as shaping, carving, firing, and painting—ceramic practitioners continue to need to investigate ways to effectively employ traditional techniques, foster innovation, and adjust to shifting market demands. In particular, there is an urgent problem that needs to be solved: how to keep up with modern times and continuously innovate while preserving and using the knowledge and spirit of ancient people?

Despite the above challenges, the interviewees are optimistic about the overall vision of Jingdezhen ceramic industry and intangible cultural heritage protection. The growth of exposition and event activities, the prosperity of bazaars and bazaar culture, the dissemination of craftsmanship and spirit, the industry's synergistic influence on the cultural tourist sector, and the innovation of operating

methods are the primary causes of this. These advantageous circumstances will create a positive feedback loop around the preservation of Jingdezhen's ceramic intangible cultural heritage, as evidenced by the Sanbao Village market and other like events that were highlighted in the interview [11]. To a certain extent, industrialization and globalization have facilitated the improvement of Jingdezhen porcelain, cost control, market expansion and business model innovation.

The above research findings echo the mainstream research point of view, that is, the government and relevant sectors of the ceramic intangible cultural heritage protection continues to increase, for the inheritance and protection of intangible cultural heritage has made a great contribution. Humans, however, are not only the object of practice but also the environment's object of impact and one of the most vital carriers of cultural inheritance and the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage projects. Therefore, establishing a positive cycle of ceramic intangible heritage protection and innovation in Jingdezhen should be the top priority in the future non-genetic inheritance work in order to enhance the production and creation environment of inheritors and assist them in fusing traditional skills with an innovative spirit [12]. According to the findings of comprehensive literature research and field investigation, the protection of ceramic intangible cultural heritage in Jingdezhen should be preserved in combination with art and culture, industrial production and craftsmanship, design innovation and characteristics, so as to promote the inheritance and vitality of intangible cultural heritage and culture under the impact of industrialization and commercialization.

5. Conclusion

In summary, Jingdezhen ceramics' intangible heritage has produced amazing successes, but the question of how to maintain innovation and inheritance over time so that it can withstand the forces of globalization and industrialization remains unsolved. This study not only identifies the issues that practitioners and industry development must resolve, but it also makes the recommendation that all the necessary favorable conditions be combined in order to form the benign development of Jingdezhen ceramics. The topic of this study is how intangible cultural heritage technology can meet the challenges of contemporary globalization and seek sustainable development and innovation.. The research on the non-genetic inheritance of Jingdezhen ceramics fills the gap of the dilemma faced by the protection of intangible cultural heritage. In addition, this study also emphasizes the promotion of the combination of art and culture and commercial promotion, the

coordination of industrial production and artisan spirit, and the continuous innovation while retaining the characteristics and charm. These suggestions help to guide the inheritance and innovation of ceramic intangible heritage in Jingdezhen.

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