

Study on evaluation of liveliness level and promotion strategy for Intangible Cultural Heritage in Qinghai Province

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Abstract

The shift towards living heritage protection necessitates robust evaluation systems. This study constructs a quantitative assessment model using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), integrating four dimensions: carrier transmission, policy support, social engagement, and production efficacy. Empirical analysis of Qinghai Province reveals: (1) moderate overall vitality with marked internal disparities; (2) hierarchical dimension performance—carrier transmission excels while policy support lags; (3) traditional crafts and folk customs demonstrate stronger vitality through effective dissemination, contrasting with marginalised traditional sports. Proposed strategies encompass liveliness inventory management, spatial carrier development, and 'Integrating Intangible Cultural Heritage' integration strategies. The model transcends conventional qualitative paradigms, providing a theoretical-practical framework for optimising living heritage mechanisms.

Keywords: Intangible Cultural Heritage; Liveliness level; Evaluation system; Promotion strategy

0. Introduction

Under the background of the transformation of world cultural heritage protection from "emergency preservation" to "liveliness inheritance", the protection concept of intangible cultural heritage (hereinafter referred to as "ICH") has changed, gradually shifting from "cultural remnants" to "liveliness" protection. The Convention for the Safeguarding of the ICH, officially adopted by the 32nd session of the UNESCO General Conference, clearly states that "safeguarding" refers to all measures aimed at ensuring the viability of ICH, including its identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, transmission (especially through formal and non-formal education), and revitalization. The protection of ICH should focus on its "liveliness inheritance process" rather than merely preserving it as a static cultural specimen. However, current ICH protection practices generally face two major problems: the contradiction between cultural authenticity and modern adaptability, and the dilemma of ambiguous protection subjects and insufficient inheritance motivation. How to scientifically assess the liveliness survival level of ICH and formulate precise improvement strategies has become a focus of both academic and policy circles.

As a convergence point of diverse cultures on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, Qinghai Province possesses six representative works of human ICH, including the Thangka Art and the Epic of King Gesar, as well as over a hundred national and provincial-level ICH projects. Its ICH is characterized by ethnic diversity, ecological vulnerability, and the threat of extinction. Despite the government's efforts in strengthening protection through legislation and establishing protected areas in recent years, some ICH still face the crisis of "museumization" due to issues such as inheritance gaps, limited dissemination, and lagging industrialization.

Against this backdrop, constructing a quantitative evaluation model to analyze the liveliness state of ICH, identify its development shortcomings, and propose differentiated strategies not only provides a theoretical tool for regional ICH protection but also has practical significance for maintaining cultural ecological balance and promoting sustainable development in ethnic areas. This study, through literature analysis and the Delphi method, deconstructs the "Four Forces Model" of ICH liveliness state (inheritance force, dissemination force, innovation force, and vitality force), aiming to provide a scientific basis for the protection and development of ICH in Qinghai Province.

1. Research Progress and Theoretical Framework

1.1 Review of Domestic and Foreign Research on the liveliness Protection of ICH

After the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) proposed the concept of "all living cultures" in 1994, the term officially entered policy documents. The release of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in 2005 marked that "liveliness" has become a key theme in the field of cultural heritage protection and a central goal of cultural heritage protection actions. In 2009, the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)

systematically proposed the “Living Heritage Approach” (LHA), emphasizing the liveliness continuation of the cultural value of heritage.

Abroad,(Jia, L. ,2024) related research focuses on the following aspects: In terms of legal guarantee systems, the European Union established a hierarchical protection system through the European Heritage Law, incorporating the protection of ICH into a unified legal framework and strengthening the enforcement effect through regional collaboration. France’s Heritage Protection Law pioneered the concept of “cultural space”, combining the material carriers of ICH with liveliness practices, promoting adaptive protection by law for liveliness inheritance. Japan’s Cultural Properties Protection Law established the “Living National Treasure” certification system, encouraging inheritors to participate in liveliness practices. In terms of community participation models, Mexico’s “Day of the Dead” festival achieved the liveliness renewal of ICH through community self-organization, and its experience was summarized as a three-stage model of “festival empowerment - skill regeneration - economic feedback”. (Table 1)

Table 1 Topics and Contents of Overseas Research on ICH

Research Topic	Author	Year	Research Content
Sustainable Development of ICH	Giliberto	2020	How cultural heritage projects implemented in the MENA region promote environmental sustainability through ecotourism and sustainable agriculture.
Community Participation in ICH Research	Sheila Watson	2010	Community-led conservation measures tend to be more sustainable, and ICH projects can better reflect the uniqueness and diversity of local culture.
Cultural Landscape Heritage and ICH	Daniel	2013	The relationship between cultural landscapes and local identity, how local cultures are preserved and displayed through heritage landscapes in the context of globalization.
Digital Research on ICH	Bonacchi	2019	Through digital museums, virtual exhibitions, etc., the display and dissemination of ICH have become more convenient and extensive.

In the domestic academic circle, there has been a consensus that ICH is regarded as a living culture with its own liveliness attributes. Based on this, the calls for and academic exploration of liveliness protection have been deepening. (Qi,Q.F. ,2009) clearly proposed the viewpoint that the fundamental purpose of protecting ICH is to preserve the “living inheritance”. He believed that all protection methods conducive to the preservation of the living inheritance of ICH are reasonable. (Liao W.J. ,2013) argued that ICH has both cultural value and market value, and the transformation from recognition to practical implementation of living protection is a necessary issue for the inheritance and industrial development of ICH. (Qi A.M. ,2017) constructed an institutional system for the liveliness protection of inheritance schools, and institutionalized the concept of liveliness protection of ICH. (Huang Z.Z. ,2024) proposed that “livelinessization” is a practical path connecting the historical value of ICH with current needs, emphasizing the need to highlight the people-oriented, contemporary, and national nature of ICH through liveliness protection, and avoiding it from becoming static exhibits. Current research mainly focuses on external factors of living inheritance and protection, such as government management, market operation, legislative guarantee, school education, and ecological museum construction.

1.2 The Essence of the Liveliness level of ICH

The concept of “living attitude of ICH” refers to the comprehensive degree at which a specific ICH maintains its vitality during the liveliness process of inheritance through the maintenance of its essence, adaptation to the environment, and transformation of value. The living space centered on ICH and serving as its carrier is linked by the inheritors, connecting the physical and spiritual spaces where the heritage exists. The embodied knowledge, experience, skills, and folk beliefs formed in this way are perfected through the inheritance mechanism in

contextualized teaching and practice, and are continuously refined into a shareable knowledge form in the process of practical application, thereby enabling the knowledge and culture related to ICH to be recognized and orderly inherited, and reflecting the vitality of ICH.

This paper studies its connotation and includes four core dimensions: the degree of carrier inheritance centered on ICH, manifested as the completeness of the inheritance lineage and the intergenerational continuity of skills and knowledge; the policy support degree based on systems, covering the levels of legal protection, the intensity of financial investment, and the effectiveness of restoration of inheritance space; the social exchange degree driven by interaction, manifested as the breadth of public participation, the depth of media dissemination, and the intensity of cultural identification; the production adaptation degree oriented by innovation, reflecting the conversion efficiency and market vitality of ICH resources into the modern economic system. The characteristics of the "living attitude of ICH" can be perceived from aspects such as carrier characteristics, expression form characteristics, cultural characteristics, and activation characteristics. An example analysis using six projects from the Representative List of the ICH of Humanity of Qinghai Province is provided, as shown in the Table 2.

Table 2 The characteristics of the Liveliness level of ICH

Name	Carrier Feature	Form Feature	Activation Feature	Illustration
Thogon Art	With Tangka, murals, sculptures, etc. as carriers	integrating Tibetan Buddhist culture and folk art elements, featuring bright colors and rigorous composition.	Business value	
Flowers	Presented through folk song performances	The melody is high-pitched and melodious, the lyrics are simple and natural.	Video and audio	
Gesar	Presented through epic singing	It is of a grand scale, with a rigorous structure, vivid language, and rich imagination.	IP development	
Tibetan Opera	Presented through theatrical performances	It integrates various art forms such as music, dance, and performance.	Festival format	
Chinese Shadow Puppetry	Presented through the use of carved human silhouettes made of animal skins or paper	During the performance, the silhouettes are projected onto the screen using light, accompanied by singing and music.	Cultural performance	
Tibetan Medicine Bath Therapy	It uses natural minerals and plant medicines as the bathing agents	It acts on the human body through methods such as soaking and fumigation.	Health preservation concept	

2. Construction of the Evaluation Model for ICH Liveliness level

2.1 Evaluation Method

This study adopts a combination of the Delphi method and the Analytic Hierarchy Process to construct the evaluation model for ICH live attitude. The Delphi method conducts multi-round anonymous expert consultations to screen and revise the rationality of the evaluation indicators for the live activation of ICH, ensuring the scientificity and authority of the indicator system; the Analytic Hierarchy Process constructs a hierarchical indicator structure,

constructs a judgment matrix, and conducts consistency tests to quantify the relative importance of each indicator, ultimately determining the weight distribution. The combination of these two methods avoids the one-sidedness of subjective experience judgment and realizes the collaborative optimization of qualitative analysis and quantitative calculation, providing methodological support for the liveliness evaluation of ICH Liveliness level.

2.2 Selection of Evaluation Indicators

When constructing the evaluation model for the live attitude of ICH, the scientific selection of the indicator system should be based on the liveliness essence of live inheritance, follow the core principle of "ensuring the vitality of ICH" in the Convention for the Safeguarding of the ICH, and respond to the practical needs of sustainable governance of cultural space in the context of China's new urbanization. This study constructs an evaluation framework from four dimensions: carrier inheritance degree, policy support degree, social exchange degree, and production efficiency degree, forming a multi-dimensional coupled and positively and negatively balanced indicator system. Finally, 4 criteria, 12 subcategories, and 28 minor categories are selected to construct the evaluation indicator system for the Liveliness level of ICH, as shown in the Table.3below.

Table 3 Evaluation Index System and Weights for the Liveliness level of ICH

Target Layer	Criterion Layer	Weight	Sub-criterion Layer	Weight	Indicator Layer	Weight	Nature
Innovative Liveliness level Evaluation Index System A	Carrier inheritance degree B1	0.5340	Inheritance Holder Scale C1	0.2453	Heritage Holder LevelD1	0.0238	Positive
					Number of Heritage Holders D2	0.0571	Positive
					Age of Heritage Holders D3	0.1643	Positive
					Project Category D4	0.0245	Positive
					Project LevelD5	0.0176	Positive
					Project Quantity D6	0.0366	Positive
			Inheritance risk coefficient C3	0.2100	Natural Reduction Rate of Heritage Holders D7	0.1343	Negative
					Inaction of Heritage Holders D8	0.0377	Negative
					Risk of Skill Distortion D9	0.0381	Negative

Policy Support degree B2	0.1872	Policy and Regulation C4	0.0967	Number of Policies D10	0.0239	Positive		
		Capital investment C5	0.0689	Policy Implementation Rate D11	0.0728	Positive		
				Investment Amount D12	0.0363	Positive		
				Reward Mechanism D13	0.0326	Positive		
		Policy implementati	0.0216	Incidence of Violations D14	0.0042	Negative		
		on deviation C6		Impact of Violations D15	0.0174	Negative		
Social exchange degree B3	0.2176	Activity scale C7	0.0966	Activity Frequency D16	0.0142	Positive		
				School Education D17	0.0718	Positive		
				Number of Participants D18	0.0106	Positive		
				Media Index C8	0.0287	Number of Propagations D19	0.0123	Positive
				Search Popularity D20	0.0164	Positive		
				Social Identity Crisis C9	0.0924	Cognitive Deviation Index D21	0.0680	Negative
						Cultural Heritage D22	0.0244	Negative

Production efficiency degree B4	0.0612	Tourism Development C10	0.0262	Proportion of ICH Tourism Income D23	0.0056	Positive
				Tourist Experience Conversion Rate D24	0.0206	Positive
		Production efficiency C11	0.0207	ICH Cultural Products D25	0.0050	Positive
				ICH Employment D26	0.0157	Positive
		Developed overload C12	0.0142	Expansion Degree of Homogeneous Production D27	0.0099	Negative
				Invasion Index of Heritage Holding Scenarios D28	0.0044	Negative

Due to significant differences in the units and magnitudes of the evaluation indicators (for example, the number of inheritors is an absolute value, and the policy implementation rate is a percentage), the incomparability needs to be eliminated through normalization. This paper uses the range method to standardize the original data.

Positive indicators (the larger the value, the better):

$$I_{ijk} = \frac{X - X_{\min}}{X_{\max} - X_{\min}}$$

Negative indicators (the smaller the value, the better):

$$I_{ijk} = \frac{X_{\max} - X}{X_{\max} - X_{\min}}$$

2.3 Determine the weights of evaluation indicators

Inviting 10 experts in the field of ICH protection (including cultural policy researchers and project managers of ICH) and ICH inheritors to form an expert group, based on the hierarchical structure of the "Evaluation Index System for the Live Attitude of ICH" shown in the figure, construct a judgment matrix, and conduct pairwise comparisons of the evaluation indicators belonging to the same criterion level. Using the Saaty 1-9 scale method to quantify the expert judgments. That is, the ratio of the importance of the i-th indicator to the j-th indicator under the same indicator level can be expressed as a_{ij} . Generally, it is assigned a value using a 1-9 proportion scale. When a_{ij} is assigned 1, 3, 5, 7, or 9, it indicates that the importance of the two indicators compared pairwise is equally important, slightly important, relatively important, very important, or absolutely important. When a_{ij} is assigned 2, 4, 6, or 8, it indicates that the importance of the two indicators compared pairwise is between the adjacent important scales. Using software such as Spssau and Yaahp to analyze it, the matrix score results of each expert are obtained respectively. The consistency ratio CI of the judgment matrices of all experts is all <0.1. The results of the expert scoring matrices that pass the consistency test are geometrically averaged to obtain the mean

judgment matrix, and then the weights of each indicator are calculated, as shown in Table 3.

2.4 Define the comprehensive evaluation criteria

In order to evaluate the live attitude of ICH as a whole, it is necessary to calculate the total of each indicator of the live attitude of ICH. This paper selects the multi-objective comprehensive evaluation method and constructs the comprehensive evaluation function of the live attitude of ICH, the mathematical formula is:

$$M = \sum_{i=1}^m (\sum_{j=1}^n I_j \times R_j) \times W_i \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

In the formula, M represents the total score of the live attitude evaluation of ICH; I_j represents the score of the individual indicator j of the live attitude of ICH; R_j represents the weight of the individual indicator j of the live attitude of ICH; W_i represents the weight of the evaluation criterion.

Based on the comprehensive evaluation score of ICH, ICH is classified into five levels: extremely poor live attitude, poor live attitude, average live attitude, good live attitude, and excellent live attitude (Table 4).

Table 4 Evaluation Criteria for the Liveliness level of ICH

Evaluation index	<0.20	0.20-0.40	0.40-0.60	0.60-0.80	>0.80
Evaluation criterion	Range	Poor	Average	Better	Good

3. Empirical Analysis on the Evaluation of ICH Approaches in Qinghai Province

3.1 Case Selection and Data Sources

Based on the statistics from the five batches of the "National ICH Representative Projects List" published by the State Council from 2006 to 2021, Qinghai Province currently has 88 national-level ICHs, covering ten major categories such as folk literature, traditional music, traditional dance, traditional drama, folk art, traditional sports and games, traditional art, traditional skills, traditional medicine, and folk customs (Table 5). From 2006 to 2023, Qinghai Province has announced 335 provincial-level ICH items. Among them, national-level ones are mainly traditional music, while provincial-level ones are mainly traditional skills. From the spatial distribution of each city and prefecture in Qinghai Province, the spatial distribution characteristics of ICH representative projects are as follows: They are mainly concentrated in Xining City, Haidong City, and Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, accounting for nearly 60% of the total number of projects, forming a core distribution area; while Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and Guoluo Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture have the fewest distribution numbers, accounting for about 10%, forming a low-density area (Figure 1).

Table 5 Statistics of Representative ICH Projects in Qinghai Province

Category	Number of National-level Projects (items)	Number of Provincial-level Projects (items)	Number of UNESCO Representative List of the ICH of Humanity Projects (items)	Total
Folk literature	9	39	1	49
Traditional music	15	32	1	48
Traditional dance	9	31	—	40
Traditional drama	3	12	2	17
Traditional sports, games and acrobatics	3	17	—	20
Traditional craftsmanship	11	90	—	101
Traditional medicine	6	17	1	24

Folk customs	17	61	—	78
Oral art	4	10	—	14
Traditional fine arts	11	26	1	38
In total	88	335	6	429

(Note: National-level includes 6 projects listed in the UNESCO Representative List of the ICH of Humanity)

At the same time, Qinghai Province has 88 national-level representative inheritors and 343 provincial-level representative inheritors. There are 3 national-level cultural ecological protection (experimental) zones (Hotong Culture, Gesar Culture (Goluo), and Tibetan Culture (Yushu)) and 3 provincial-level cultural ecological protection (experimental) zones (Tu Ethnic Group (Huzhu), De Du Mongolian (Haixi), and Xunhua Salar Ethnic Group) for ICH. 33 ICH (Qingxiu) employment workshops, 5 national-level ICH production protection demonstration bases, 7 provincial-level ICH production protection demonstration bases, and 27 provincial-level ICH inheritance bases have been established.

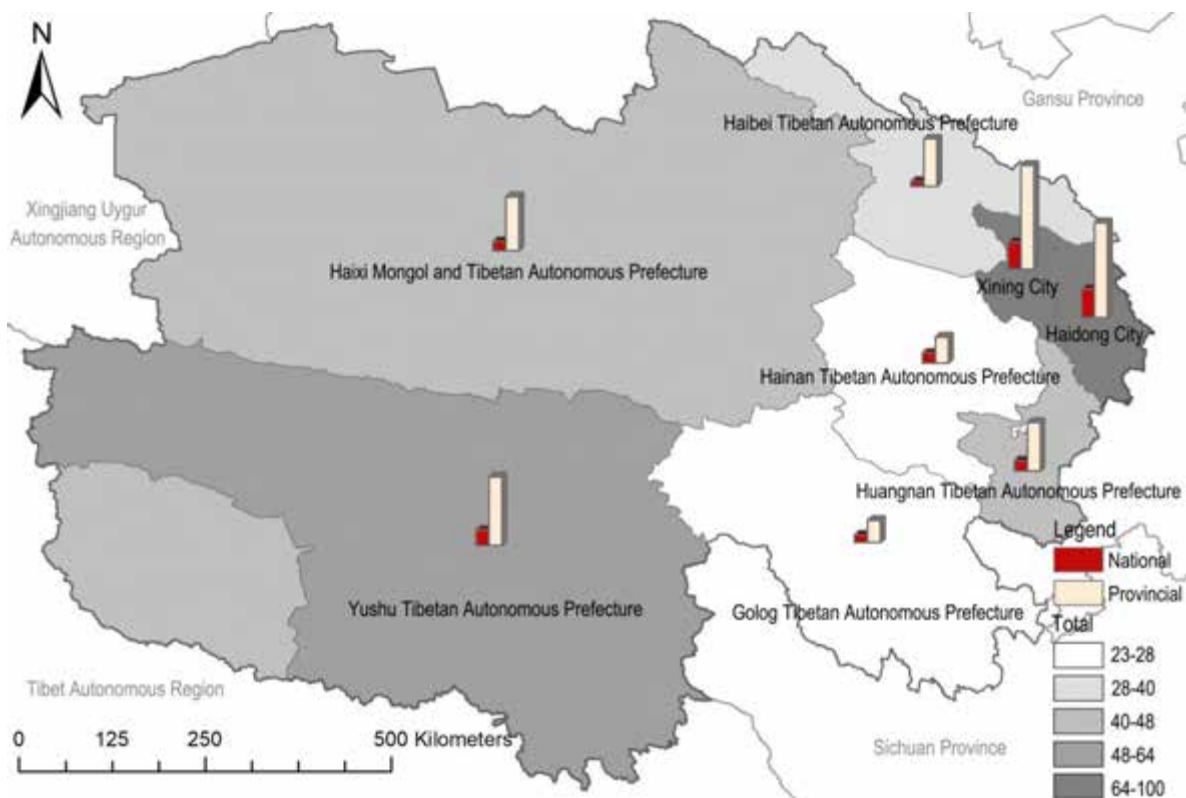


Figure 1: Distribution of Representative ICH Projects in Each Prefecture of Qinghai Province

This research was based on the "Qinghai Province ICH List", "Qinghai Province Cultural Statistical Yearbook (2018-2024)", the list of ICH representative projects, information on inheritors, and policy texts such as the "Qinghai Province ICH Regulations". It integrated the data on cultural heritage protection funds investment from 2018 to 2024, quantified policy support indicators. Through on-site research from July to August in 2024, interviews with inheritors of 6 ICH representative projects such as Hotong Art and Gesar Epic were conducted to record the frequency of skill transmission and innovative practices. Participatory observation methods were used to collect audience interaction data from 15 ICH performance activities such as the Tarsar Monastery Butter Sculpture Exhibition and the Yushu Horse Racing Festival. Data on the degree of social exchange was derived from the dissemination data of topics related to "Qinghai ICH" on platforms such as Douyin and Weibo from 2018 to 2024, and public awareness and consumption behavior were analyzed. Data on the degree of production efficiency was quantified through the sales revenue of ICH workshops, the scale of employees, and product development

cases (such as Snow Leopard Culture).

3.2 Evaluation Results

After comprehensive calculation, the overall score of the ICH (ICH) in its living form in Qinghai Province is 0.44. According to the living attitude grading standard (0-1 range, divided into five levels: extremely poor, poor, average, good, and excellent), the overall score falls within the critical range between "poor" (0.3 - 0.4) and "average" (0.4 - 0.5), indicating that the current overall living inheritance of ICH in Qinghai Province is in the transitional stage from a low level to a medium level.

From the perspective of the living attitude scores of various categories of ICH in Qinghai Province, the living attitude of traditional skills (0.75), folk customs (0.70), and traditional fine arts (0.60) are at a good level, with leading scores and obvious advantages in living attitude; the living attitude of traditional dance (0.46) and traditional music (0.45) are at a general level, and there is still room for improvement in the living inheritance ability; the living attitude of traditional medicine (0.38), traditional drama (0.37), folk art (0.29), and folk literature (0.23) are at a poor level, with low scores and facing a systemic inheritance crisis; the living attitude of traditional sports, games, and acrobatics (0.17) is at an extremely poor level, and is at risk of breaking the living inheritance.

Based on the scores of the four criteria (Figure 2), in terms of the degree of inheritance of the carriers, traditional skills received the highest score, benefiting from the dual promotion of the ICH workshops (such as the Silver and Copperware Making Training Institute) and the construction of digital archives; traditional drama received the lowest score, due to the lack of training venues (such as the Qinghai Pingxian Opera, with only 2 fixed performance venues remaining). In terms of policy support, traditional skills received the highest score, reflecting the tilt of policy resources (such as the provincial ICH special funds accounted for 42% from 2021 to 2023); traditional sports, games and acrobatics received the lowest score, lacking special support policies (accounting for only 3.5% of the total funds) and regular management mechanisms. In terms of social exchange, folk customs received the highest score, achieving high-frequency public participation through festival activities (such as the Tarsar Temple Lantern Festival, the Hotong June Festival); traditional medicine received the lowest score, limited by the single market-oriented channel (over 90% relying on local clinics for sales) and weak dissemination. In terms of production efficiency, folk customs received the highest score, as the cultural tourism integration projects (such as the Tujia Ethnic Folk Tourism) brought economic benefits; traditional medicine received the lowest score, with a low degree of industrialization (no large-scale production enterprises) and a lack of innovative products (only 3 patent registrations).

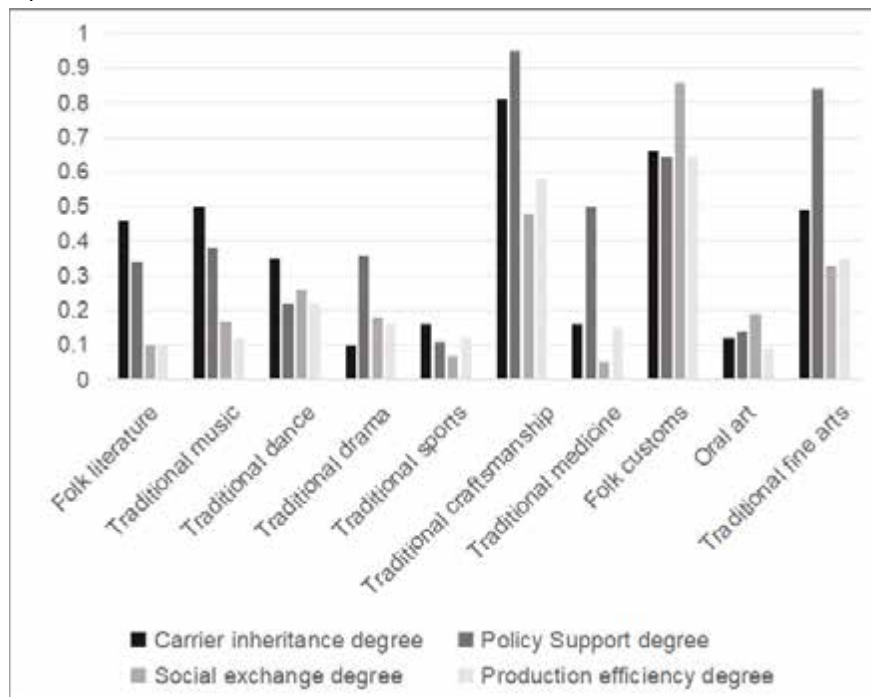


Figure 2 Score of the criterion layer for the top ten categories of ICH in Qinghai Province

3.3 Result Analysis

Traditional skills, folk customs and traditional art, positive driving forces from policy support and industrialization; The number and level of inheritors show a good active attitude. Traditional skills (such as Huangzhong Silver and Copper Ware, Jiaoya Tibetan Blanket) and folk customs (such as Hotong June Festival, Tu Ethnicity Naonong Festival) are the benchmark areas for the protection of ICH in Qinghai. The policy support is strong, the industrialization level is high, and the social participation is extensive. Traditional skills achieve economic transformation through the development of cultural and creative products (such as snow leopard-themed leather embroidery, Qing embroidery pendants) and large-scale production, while traditional art relies on the high-end art market of Hotong Thangka and pile embroidery to form a stable industrial chain. At the same time, the model of ICH workshops drives employment for farmers and herdsmen, and the production efficiency is good.

Traditional dance and traditional music, coexistence of cultural tourism integration and inheritance bottlenecks; Traditional dance and music face problems such as aging of inheritors and insufficient participation from young groups, and the coverage of digital recording is low. Policy resources are concentrated on handicrafts, while non-performance art ICHs lack special support. For example, the construction of traditional drama training venues lags behind, and traditional dance and music attract tourists through scenic area performances (such as the ICH performances in Taichang Ancient City), but there are insufficient regular activities and rely on short-term festival exposure. Cultural tourism integration brings economic benefits, but the industrialization path of traditional dance and music is single and relies on ticket revenue, with low added value.

Traditional medicine, traditional drama, folk art, and folk literature are facing a crisis in systematic inheritance; the digital protection of traditional medicine and folk literature is weak. For instance, the Tibetan medicinal bath method only has basic archives but lacks a platform for liveliness display. There are insufficient venues for traditional drama transmission, and the genre of folk art relies on oral transmission, which makes it prone to loss due to the absence of a continuous line of inheritors. The policy coverage is uneven; traditional medicine and drama have not been included in the key support list, and the investment is insufficient. The marketization ability is weak; traditional medicine lacks e-commerce channels; folk literature, due to the lack of innovative expression (such as adaptation to short videos), is difficult to attract young people. The commercialization path of the genre of folk art is single (such as tea house performances), and the income is unstable.

Traditional sports, games, and acrobatics are on the verge of losing their liveliness inheritance; there are no venues for transmission (the number of folk art troupes is decreasing year by year), and they lack special support and have not been included in the mainstream promotion system of national fitness. The activities are mostly carried out based on festivals for short periods and have insufficient regular participation; the commercialization path is single (such as the archery association relying on a small group of enthusiasts), and the market appeal is low. The economic transformation ability is weak, and there is a lack of cultural and creative development (such as no social fire theme study tours), making it difficult to form a scale effect (Table 6).

Table 6 Analysis of Live Evaluation Data for the Top Ten Categories of ICH

Liveliness level score	Reason analysis	Indicator analysis
0.6-0.8	Driving Factors and Advantages	Key Support
Traditional craftsmanship	Outstanding production efficiency: mature industrialization Precise policy support: 40% of the national-level production-oriented protection demonstration bases	the proportion of ICH creative products in D25 accounts for 35% annual average growth rate of fiscal input: 18% (D12)
Folk customs	Vigorous social exchanges: Frequent festival activities High degree of cultural and tourism integration: The Na Ton Festival and the June Festival will become cultural and tourism IPs	The frequency of D16 activities is the highest in the province The revenue from D23 tourism accounts for 28%
Traditional fine arts	The intergenerational transmission is relatively balanced: 25% of the inheritors are young people Digital dissemination leads the way: Digital Tibetan painting collections reach over 10 million yuan in transaction volume	The average age of the D3 inheritors is 50 years old D20 search popularity grows by an average of 45% annually
0.4-0.6	Bottleneck issues and potential	Main problem areas
Traditional dance	Performance scene contraction: Traditional ritual spaces have decreased by 70% Insufficient innovation: Dance choreography homogeneity rate exceeds 60%	D18 Annual participation rate has dropped by 12% D27 Homogenization expansion degree is 0.58
Traditional music	Audience aging: The proportion of listeners over 60 years old is 65% Single dissemination form: Digital music works account for less than 10%	D21 Cognitive deviation index is 0.42 D19 New media dissemination accounts for 8%
0.2-0.4	System crisis and root causes	Intuitive risks
Traditional medicine	Inheritance Gap: Only 6 national-level inheritors, with an average age of 68 years old Policy Support Mismatch: Funds are biased towards tourism development, and the integration rate of the medical system is less than 5%	D7 Natural Decrease Rate: 7% (the highest in the province) D13 Reward Mechanism Coverage Rate: Only 12%
traditional drama	Loss of Young Audience: The audience under 35 years old accounts for less than 15% Digital Absence: Online performances account for less than 5%	D16 Annual Average Decrease in Activity Frequency: 20% D19 Digital Communication Investment Ratio: 3%
folk art	Lack of Training Funds: County-level inheritors' subsidies coverage rate is 10% Disappearance of Performance Venues: Traditional tea houses have decreased by 70%	D14 Violation Rate: 22% (the problem of fund misappropriation is prominent) D28 Scene Occupation Index: 0.65
folk literature	Oral Inheritance Crisis: There are only 5 young inheritors of the Gesar Epic Insufficient Modern Transformation: Lack of IP development and digital narrative	D9 Risk Level of Skill Distortion: 4.2 (evaluated by experts) D25 Cultural and Creative Industry Output Ratio: Less than 1%
<0.2	At risk of breaking and analysis	Core weakness
Traditional sports, games, and acrobatics	The traditional scenes are disappearing: traditional events such as horse racing and archery have decreased by 90% Policy neglect: There is no dedicated protection fund or event planning	D2 inheritors is only 23 (the lowest in the province) The penetration rate of D17 school education is 0%

Meanwhile, the status of ICH preservation in each prefecture of Qinghai Province was statistically analyzed (Table 7), and spatial visualization was conducted (Figure 3) to facilitate the formulation of targeted strategies based on the prefectures. Among them, the ICH preservation status in Xining City, Huangnan Prefecture and Haidong Prefecture was at a good level, while that in Haibei Prefecture, Yushu Prefecture was at a medium level, and that in Hainan Prefecture, Haixi Prefecture and Goluo Prefecture was at a poor level.

Table 7 Evaluation of the living attitudes of ICH in each prefecture of Qinghai Province

Ranking	Provinces /Counties	Carrier inheritance degree	Policy Support degree	Social exchange degree	Production efficiency degree	Overall score	Liveliness level
1st	Xining City	0.82	0.78	0.75	0.68	0.79	Better
2nd	Huangnan Prefecture	0.76	0.65	0.70	0.55	0.72	Better
3rd	Haidong City	0.68	0.60	0.65	0.50	0.65	Better
4th	Haibei Prefecture	0.53	0.48	0.56	0.26	0.54	Generally
5th	Yushu Prefecture	0.55	0.45	0.60	0.30	0.53	Generally
6th	Hainan Prefecture	0.40	0.35	0.38	0.15	0.38	Poor
7th	Haixi Prefecture	0.38	0.30	0.35	0.20	0.34	Poor
8th	Goluo Prefecture	0.25	0.20	0.28	0.10	0.24	Poor

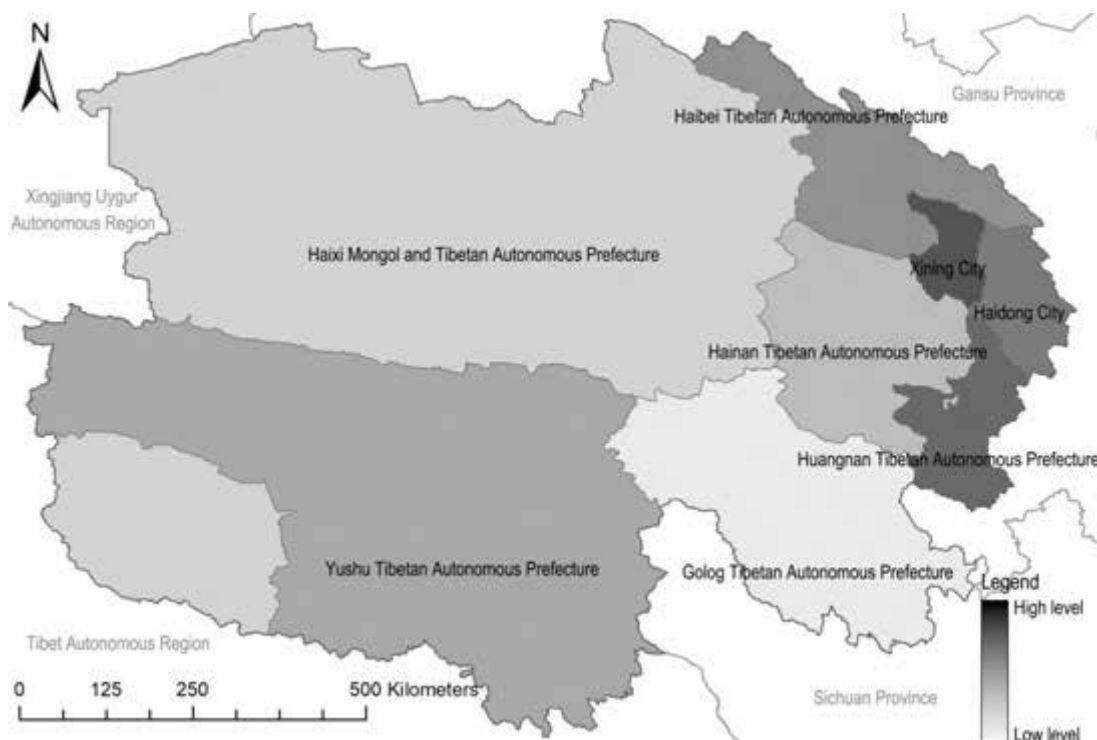


Figure 3 The spatial distribution of the ICH across various cities and counties

4. Strategies for Enhancing the liveliness Transmission of ICH in Qinghai

4.1 liveliness Addition Mechanism

Although Qinghai Province has established a four-level ICH list system at the national, provincial, municipal (city), and county (district) levels, the current list management still has several prominent problems such as high data isolation, insufficient public participation, and lagging liveliness updates. The national and provincial lists are generally announced by government documents, making it difficult for the public to obtain comprehensive data on ICH in Qinghai. The public has a low level of awareness of basic information such as the categories of ICH projects and the distribution of projects by cities and counties. The subjective initiative for bottom-up addition is weak. At the same time, the protection measures for the list have long relied on static management and failed to achieve liveliness adjustment based on the evaluation results of the living attitude (such as the disappearance of inheritors or the extinction of the environment). As a result, some endangered projects are difficult to be promptly included in the key protection category. Therefore, it is urgent to establish a "data-driven, public participation, and hierarchical response" liveliness addition mechanism.

In response to the relatively fixed protection situation of existing ICH projects and the lack of a digital and public platform for liveliness addition (Song, J.H., 2015). The Qinghai Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism can collaborate with the Qinghai ICH Protection and Smartization Center and the digital management platform "Qinghai ICH Map" jointly created by Baidu. This platform integrates the data resources of the four-level list in the province, publicly displays core information such as the map of ICH projects, the distribution of inheritors, and training venues, and opens functional modules for public application, evaluation, and supervision. By real-time access to liveliness evaluation indicators (such as the frequency of D16 activities, D25 cultural product output), the platform can automatically identify low-living attitude projects (if the rate of inheritance of the Lozhou Gezarsa Epic is 7%) and endangered categories (such as traditional sports, games, and acrobatics ICH in Haixi Prefecture <0.2), triggering warnings and promoting the management department to initiate emergency addition procedures according to risk levels.

4.2 Construction of ICH Spaces

There is an imbalance in regional development in the construction of ICH spaces in Qinghai Province. Currently, the three national-level cultural ecological protection areas (Thorgon Culture, Gesar Culture, and Tibetan Culture) and the three provincial-level protection areas (Tuo Ethnic Group, De Du Mongolian, and Xunhua Salar Ethnic Group) are concentrated in the eastern regions such as Huangnan and Yushu. Meanwhile, the 72 production-based bases (including 5 national-level, 7 provincial-level demonstration bases, and 33 Qingxiang embroidery workshops) also exhibit a "dense in the east and sparse in the west" pattern, resulting in weak capacity for the liveliness transformation of ICH spaces in the western regions such as Haixi and Guoluo.

At the level of cultural ecological protection areas, (Dai, X., 2020) we can leverage the advantage of the Thorgon Cultural Ecological Zone (in Huangnan Prefecture) in the abalone painting industry cluster to collaborate with 33 Qingxiang embroidery workshops to create a "ICH production - cultural tourism experience" complex. By adopting the "front store-back workshop + e-commerce live streaming" model (Dai Xin, 2020), we can enhance the efficiency of the production-based bases and promote an annual output value exceeding 800 million yuan. In response to the shrinking inheritance scenarios in the Gesar Cultural Ecological Zone (in Aba Prefecture), we can rely on 27 provincial-level inheritance bases to build a digital narration center, restore traditional ritual spaces such as horse racing and shooting festivals, and cover low-density areas with "village-based mobile workshops" to alleviate the crisis of spatial discontinuity. At the same time, we can upgrade the 5 Qingxiang embroidery workshops in the Tuo Ethnic Cultural Ecological Zone (in Huzhu County) into a "ICH study and tourism + folk customs tourism" hub, design the chain of "homestay experience - festival performance - handmade creation", and strengthen the degree of cultural and tourism integration (D23 indicator).

4.3 "Integrating ICH"

The integration of "ICH" in Qinghai Province should be based on the regional resource endowment and the differences in the attitude towards life. It needs to break through the current bottlenecks such as "domination by cultural and tourism integration, with insufficient penetration in other fields" and "single high-scoring regional models and ambiguous low-scoring regional paths". Combining with the research by Chen Wei and Yang Lianjiao (2020) on the spatial differentiation characteristics of ICH in Qinghai, the ICH across the province presents a spatial differentiation pattern of "eastern cultural and tourism type, central production type, and western ecological

type". It is necessary to construct a "tailored to local conditions, integrating ICH" integration system based on the different attitude levels of different prefectures and cities (Xining, Huangnan, Hedong are "better", Hainan, Haixi, and Guoluo are "poor") and the characteristics of ICH categories.

High-scoring areas (Xining, Huangnan, Haidong): Centered on "ICH (ICH) + tourism", extend the chains of "ICH + cultural creation" and "ICH + technology". Xining City, leveraging the ICH clusters such as Hotong Tangka and Huangzhong Silver and Copper Ware (with an annual output value of over 1 billion yuan), promotes the linkage of "ICH workshops, theme scenic areas, and city IPs", drawing on the "urban ICH complex" model (Chen Wei et al., 2020), to create immersive ICH districts (such as Tangka Digital Art Museum), develop digital cultural products like "ICH limited edition boxes" and "Yuanzuo Collection", and increase the proportion of D25 cultural industry output to 40%; Huangnan Prefecture, relying on the Hotong Cultural Ecological Protection Area, deepens the integration of "ICH + festivals", embedding folk activities such as the June Festival and Tibetan Opera Performances into the Qinghai Lake tourism route, and designing an "ICH Experience Points System" (tourists can exchange cultural products by participating in training activities), enhancing social exchange rate (the annual average increase in activity frequency is 15%); Haidong Prefecture, leveraging the folk customs of the Tu ethnic group, promotes "ICH + study tours", building an ICH study camp in Huzhu County, and jointly developing "ICH handicraft courses" with the Qingxi Embroidery Workshop, attracting young audience (the proportion of participants under 35 years old has increased to 50%).

Low-scoring areas (Hainan, Haixi, Guoluo): Taking "ICH + ecology" and "ICH + medical care" as breakthrough points, activate marginalized ICH categories. Hainan Prefecture, addressing the low attitude towards traditional medicine (score 0.38) and the singleity of market channels, promotes "ICH + health care", introducing business models such as hot spring therapy and medicinal bath experiences at the Tibetan Medicine Heritage Base (such as Guinan County Tibetan Hospital), developing "Tibetan Medicine Health Tourism Packages", and promoting the integration rate of the medical system (from <5% to 20%); Haixi Prefecture, relying on the De'udu Mongolian Cultural Ecological Protection Area, pilots "ICH + ecological compensation", integrating Mongolian epic training and traditional horse racing activities into the national park system, extracting 3 yuan of ecological funds for each ICH experience by tourists.

5. Conclusions and Outlook

This study focused on the liveliness inheritance of ICH in Qinghai Province. Addressing the common issue in current ICH protection, which is "emphasizing static preservation while neglecting liveliness development", a liveliness evaluation index system based on the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) was constructed. This system quantitatively assessed the liveliness level of ICH projects from four dimensions: carrier inheritance degree, policy support degree, social exchange degree, and production efficiency degree. The scientificity and applicability of this system were verified by taking Qinghai Province as an example. The research results showed that the comprehensive score of ICH liveliness in Qinghai Province was 0.44, indicating that it was in the transitional stage from a low level to a medium level. However, there were significant differences among different categories and regions: traditional skills, folk customs, etc., scored ahead due to their advantages in industrialization and cultural tourism integration (0.6 - 0.75), while traditional medicine, folk arts, etc., fell into a systemic crisis due to the lack of inheritance continuity and policy support (scores < 0.4). Based on this, the study proposed strategies such as liveliness supplementation mechanism, spatial network reconstruction, and "ICH +" integration, aiming to promote ICH protection from "passive rescue" to "active adaptation" through digital platforms, resource elasticity allocation, and cross-border collaboration. This study hopes to promote the return of ICH protection from "cultural specimens" to "life practice", injecting vitality into the creative transformation and sustainable development of outstanding traditional cultures worldwide.

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