

Inheritance and Development of Xianyang Traditional Dance from the Perspective of Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection

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Abstract

Purpose – From the perspective of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), this study takes the provincial-level traditional dance heritage items selected in Xianyang City as the research object, analyzes their current status of inheritance and development, reveals the main dilemmas faced, and provides theoretical basis and practical guidance for the protection and sustainable development of traditional dance ICH in Xianyang.

Design/Methodology/Approach – This study combines literature review with field investigation. It first traces the current state of inheritance for traditional dance items on the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) list in Xianyang. Then it examines the three obstacles to their transmission from three perspectives. These obstacles are cultural voicelessness (difficulty in expressing cultural meaning), cultural attrition (loss of original elements), and cultural decline (weakening of vitality).

Findings – This study shows that there are still three major dilemmas while certain headway has been made in the transmission and development of Xianyang's traditional dance ICH items. These are respectively characterized as cultural voicelessness, cultural attrition, and cultural decline — each reflecting a different layer of heritage erosion.

Research Implications – To tackle these dilemmas, this paper puts forward six strategies: boosting cultural confidence, integrating heritage into daily production and life, building a favorable cultural ecology, enriching dance content and forms, improving living inheritance, and constructing intergenerational heritage channels. These suggestions offer theoretical support and practical guidance for inheriting Xianyang's traditional dance intangible cultural heritage.

Keywords: Xianyang; Traditional dance; Intangible Cultural Heritage; Inheritance and Development

JEL Classifications: Z11, L83

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I. Introduction

The concept of intangible cultural heritage (hereinafter referred to as “ICH”) protection has gained widespread public acceptance. As an important component of ICH, traditional dance accounts for 356 items in the national representative list of ICH, representing 9.86% of the total (China Intangible Cultural Heritage Digital Museum, n.d.). “From the perspective of ICH protection, traditional dance primarily refers to dance forms created by the general public, possessing a long historical and cultural tradition, passed down through generations, widely circulated, and continuing to the present day in a living manner, characterized by distinctive ethnic styles and regional features” (Ma, 2023). With the rapid processes of modernization and urbanization, traditional dance as a form of ICH is facing severe challenges. So it urgently requires research and protection. Therefore, Examining how Xianyang safeguards and evolves its traditional dance heritage offers lessons for the inheritance and development of traditional dance ICH in Shaanxi Province and elsewhere in China.

II. Current State and Basic Profile of Xianyang Traditional Dance ICH

Xianyang, located in the heart of Shaanxi’s Guanzhong Plain, is flanked by the Wei River to the south and the Zong Mountains to the north. It was once the capital region for twelve dynastic periods, including the Zhou, Qin, Han, and Tang dynasties. The local climate belongs to the warm temperate semi-arid continental monsoon category with four distinct seasons, moderate conditions, and an annual average temperature of 13.3°C. Therefore, over centuries of daily life and productive labor, the region’s hardworking people have produced a diverse array of traditional dances. These performances carry distinct local characteristics and deep cultural meanings, which reflect how local people live, think, and appreciate beauty. As of January 2026, Shaanxi Province had released eight batches of provincial-level ICH representative projects, totaling 1,161 items. 76 items (or 6.54%) are traditional dance items. Within the city of Xianyang, there are 121 projects which have made it onto the provincial ICH protection list. Seven of them (5.79%) fall under the category of traditional dance, and they are distributed across six designated protection units (see Table 1).

Table 1. Statistics of Provincial-Level Intangible Cultural Heritage Traditional Dance Items in Xianyang City

No.	Announcement Date	Item No.	Name	Level	Batch	Declaring Area/ Institution/ Community
1	May 17, 2007	III-4	Ox-Drawn Drum	Provincial	1st	Xianyang City
2	May 17, 2007	III-5	Jiaolong Spinning Drum	Provincial	1st	Qian County, Xianyang City
3	June 24, 2009	III-27	Dragon Dance (Sanyuan Old Dragon)	Provincial	2nd	Sanyuan County Cultural Center
4	June 24, 2009	III-37	Jinghe Bamboo Horse	Provincial	2nd	Jingyang County Bureau of Culture and Sports
5	June 24, 2009	III-39	Dongzhai Eighteen Arhats	Provincial	2nd	Sanyuan County Cultural Center
6	September 26, 2013	III-50	Changwu Backed Core Child	Provincial	4th	Changwu County Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Center
7	December 10, 2025	III-71	Qindu Dongnanfang Ox-Drawn Drum	Provincial	8th	Dongnanfang Economic Cooperative, Weibin Subdistrict, Qindu District, Xianyang City

Note: Data source: Shaanxi Provincial People's Government Website: <https://www.shaanxi.gov.cn/>

1. Ox-Drawn Drum

The Ox-Drawn Drum, which belongs to the traditional Shehuo drum dances found across Xianyang, is a notable form, particularly popular in Qindu and Weicheng districts. The name comes from the drum's size and weight. It is too large for people to lift and carry by hand, so it originally had to be transported on an ox-drawn cart. Over time, as drums grew even bigger, tractors and trucks gradually took the place of ox carts. And this shift also gives drummers more freedom to show off their dance moves.

The typical instrumental setup for Ox-Drawn Drum includes two large drums, one small drum, four large gongs, six small gongs, four horn trumpets (sometimes horse trumpets), eight pairs of Bangjiao clappers, and anywhere from forty to fifty pairs of cymbals (which can reach two to three hundred pairs on grand occasions).

Based on “Shiyangjin” or “Shehuo Gu” rhythms, the drum and gong patterns coordinate with each other. In terms of the formation, Bangjiao players lead at the front, followed by over a hundred pairs of cymbals. Large and small gongs are arranged in two rows, with a small drum placed in the middle. Four horn trumpets line up horizontally, and two large drums anchor the rear. Dancers adopt poses such as Tiger Pouncing on Prey and Golden Rooster Standing on One Leg. Their movements are both forceful and graceful. In essence, they dance as they drum, giving the performance a distinctive character—steady, poised, elegant, and full of energy.

2. Jiaolong Spinning Drum

Jiaolong Spinning Drum comes from Dawang Village in Qian County, which is home to a folk spinning drum dance. The name refers to the flood dragon (jiaolong) designs painted on the drum bodies. Local legend shows that this piece was originally called Song of Triumph. It served as a ceremonial drum and music ensemble reserved for the Ming emperor, performed just outside the Meridian Gate to greet military commanders returning from victorious campaigns.

As for the instrumentation, there are many traditional setups. These include six drums, six gongs, fourteen nao (an antique percussion instrument), and two horse trumpets roughly two meters long. However, bugles are more common today. Later on, a larger command drum was added, and the cymbal count rose to forty or fifty pairs. The dance gets its character from the spinning motion, which appears in two forms: self-spinning and circle-spinning. Basic moves include the jumping strike, bouncing spin, carp turning over, and phoenix fluttering a single wing. Performers wear white headscarves, traditional white shirts with black waistcoats, coordinating their movements in various combinations. The overall effect is rugged, bold, vigorous, and lively.

3. Sanyuan Old Dragon

Sanyuan Old Dragon, also called the Xiguan Old Dragon by locals because most performances take place in the villages around the county town’s West Gate (Xiguan), is from Sanyuan County which has an old folk dragon dance tradition. It is said that this dance was related to Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty, Li Shimin. When this area suffered drought conditions, he came across a painting of a dragon hanging in an art shop along the Qinghe River in Longqiao Town. Because the dragon in the painting had no pupils in its eyes, the emperor painted them in. Then the dragon came to life on the spot. And it flew into the sky, gathered clouds, and brought rain, ending the drought. From then on, the people saw this dragon as their protector and began performing dragon dances as a ritual to seek the dragon god’s blessing.

The performance of this dance follows Dragon Making, Eye Dotting, Fish-Dragon Transformation, and Dragon Roaming the World. So artisans build the dragon’s body but leave the eyes unpainted. The dragon becomes truly alive only after a respected elder from the community dots in the pupils. Then, accompanied by drum and gong music, the performers move to the riverside. Typically, the old dragon leads the way, with the Fire God Tower following behind. When the performance arrives at a home, the dragon’s head enters the

doorway first, which symbolizes blessings arriving at the household.

And the dance includes a range of movements and postures, such as “Giant Dragon Overturning the River,” “Dragon Coiling at the Gate,” and “Dragon Rolling Over.” These moves bring the dragon’s mystery, majesty, and power into the dancing, creating a feeling of unity between man and dragon. The overall performance is grand and imposing, carrying a strong sense of good fortune and joy.

4. Jinghe Bamboo Horse

The Jinghe Bamboo Horse gets its name from the construction of the horse’s skeleton which is made from bamboo strips. Jinghe Bamboo Horse from Zaoping Village stands out as the most representative among the various bamboo horse performances in the area. The local legend traces this tradition back to the late Ming Dynasty. That’s when the ancestors of the Gao family in Zaoping Village founded a Bamboo Horse Association. They put on bamboo horse dances as a tribute to Sun Simiao, the revered King of Medicine.

People usually perform this dance from the 1st to the 3rd day of the second lunar month. There are 11 to 13 people involved in the typical show. One of them leads the horses at the front, two bring up the rear, and ten horses occupy the middle. The performers split into three groups. They are the bamboo horse group, the drum and gong group, and the lantern procession group. One additional person sets off fireworks to liven up the atmosphere. Most of the content and storylines draw from ancient military battle dramas. The performance includes five major routine categories, which are Horse Exit, Single Horse Exit, Double Horse Exit (also known as Fierce Young Horse Emergence), Lantern Tour, and Double Appearance (also called Wind Stirring Snow). Together, these cover over 80 different formations. That said, depending on the space available or the number of performers on hand, only a selection of these routines may be performed on any given occasion.

The heart of the bamboo horse performance is running, which is why people also call it Running Bamboo Horse. Throughout the entire show, whether you look at rhythm, dynamics, or emotion, the artists consistently rely on the small step (also referred to as the scattering foot run) as their basic movement. The overall style comes across as elegant, refined, and graceful.

5. Dongzhai Eighteen Arhats

Dongzhai Eighteen Arhats comes from a traditional folk Shehuo dance called the Eighteen Arhats in Dongzhai Village, Sanyuan County. The name comes from what happens on stage. Eighteen young men use their body postures and intertwined arms to shape themselves into different arhat images. Local tradition holds that similar performances existed as far back as the Eastern Han Dynasty.

When the dance begins, nine strong and robust performers act as the bases for the entire show. With drum and gong music playing in the background, each base carries one performer on their shoulders. Together, they move in circles, shift between formations, and execute a variety of movements. Some of the signature postures include Sun Illuminates Four Gates, Single Incense Stick Pointing to Heaven, Lotus Giving Birth to a Child,

Child Worshipping Guanyin, Strong Man Carrying a Child, Golden Gate Memorial Archway, Golden Snake Shedding Its Skin, Joyfully Crossing the Skybridge, Laozi Riding an Ox, and Ascending the Altar to Appoint a General.

The postures of this dance are unique, the movements graceful, and the major and minor arhats wear distinctive costumes. Together, these elements give the dance an artistic style that is elegant, vigorous, and uninhibited.

6. Changwu Backed Core Child

Changwu Backed Core Child, also known as “Backed Pavilion,” is a form of Shehuo folk performance found mainly in Wujiagou Village, Changwu County. Legend has it that a village was once threatened by a demon, and the local children used their wisdom and courage to drive the evil away. In memory of these brave children, the “Core Child” performance was created, in which children are dressed as heroes to symbolize courage and fearlessness.

The carrying frame used in the Changwu Backed Core Child is typically made of locust wood and shaped like a cross-shaped single ladder. The frame consists of five parts: the main frame board, backrest board, foot board, shoulder board, and waist board, all joined together using mortise and tenon joints. The performance usually involves more than 20 people divided into eight groups. Strong adults are chosen to carry children aged three to five on the frames for high-altitude performances. The children wear colorful costumes and painted masks, and the upper and lower performers are fixed together as a single unit.

During the performance, the participants line up in columns. The lower performers either walk in circles or perform cross steps, while the upper performers pose with props, wave sleeves, fan themselves, and swing gracefully through the air. The performance is light, elegant, magnificent, and highly distinctive.

7. Qindu Dongnanfang Ox-Drawn Drum

Qindu Dongnanfang Ox-Drawn Drum is a traditional drum performance form which is prevalent in Dongnanfang Village, Qindu District, Xianyang City, Shaanxi Province. It has a long history which can be traced back to the Qin Dynasty. With its traditional functions primarily manifested in military drum encouragement and sacrificial rituals, it has profound cultural origins. In modern times, through the continuous inheritance and development of multiple generations of artists such as Yu Zhilin, Yu Kai, and Liu Shengbo, and driven by Yu Kai and others in the 1990s, its influence has increasingly expanded. In contemporary times, it is mainly used on festival occasions.

In contemporary times, it is mainly used on festival occasions. The performance instruments feature the large drum as the core, supplemented by small drums, gongs, cymbals, ox-horn trumpets, long trumpets, and others, forming a comprehensive performance form with percussion as the main body combined with dance movements. And the large drum player undertakes the guiding and conducting functions throughout the entire

performance, constituting the core element of this performance form, while other instruments play a supporting and echoing role. The performance repertoire has been innovated based on tradition, forming various technical features such as Great Roc Spreading Its Wings and Skyward Cannon. The performance form is characterized by grand lineup, powerful momentum, and strong impact, demonstrating formidable presence and infectious appeal.

III. Realistic Predicaments Facing the Inheritance and Development

Over the course of its history, Xianyang has managed to preserve a considerable number of traditional dance items. Beyond the provincial-level ICH dances already mentioned, the city's districts and counties are home to many other forms, for instance, traditional Yangge, drum dances, Shehuo dragon dances, stilt walking, and more. These dances are not just performances but they serve as important carriers of Xianyang's folk customs, rituals, and festivals. Moreover, they show how local people understand the world and nature, and they represent a kind of excellent traditional performing art that has been passed down through generations in this region. In order to protect and develop these traditional arts, local governments, industry associations, experts and scholars, and community leaders in Xianyang have worked together to protect these traditional dances. Thanks to these joint efforts, the dances have received a certain level of safeguarding. That said, when it comes to inheritance and development, some problems still remain.

1. Cultural Aphasia: The Absence of Transmission Subjects in the Inheritance and Development of Xianyang Traditional Dance

Xianyang traditional dance is an art form spontaneously created and transmitted by the broad masses of Xianyang people. It not only originates from the lives and practices of Xianyang's populace but also resonates closely with their emotions and needs. In recent years, due to the acceleration of urbanization in various districts and counties of Xianyang and the impact of industrial structure transformation, Xianyang traditional dance has gradually lost its former confidence in the process of urban and rural development. It now faces a series of problems, including "aging inheritors," "art vanishing with its master," "lack of successors," and "cultural discontinuity", falling into a predicament where no one carries on the tradition.

As is well known, many traditional dance items have no identifiable founders or original creators. Some are difficult to trace due to their long history, while most are the crystallization of collective creation, passed down orally from the older generation to the younger, generation after generation. According to the author's field investigations in villages and towns across various districts and counties of Xianyang in recent years, there are very few young people in the villages on ordinary days. Even in urban communities and parks, young people are rarely seen. Toward evening, elderly people in the villages gather at the village entrances to chat about daily life, while in urban communities and parks, retired elderly men and women can be seen taking walks or doing

square dancing. However, performances or displays of Xianyang's folk traditional dances are rarely seen.

Interviews with local community leaders, village officials, and residents in relevant districts and counties revealed several contributing factors. First, because of unbalanced urban-rural development, many young people from the region choose to work and settle in cities, where they can enjoy the material comforts and living standards offered by modern metropolises. Second, many traditional dance intangible cultural heritage (ICH) projects lack market viability and have no economic returns and most rural youth leave for cities for better-paying jobs, inadvertently breaking their ties with their hometowns. Third, some traditional dances place high demands on learners. Without a certain level of artistic aptitude and learning ability, it is difficult to master the techniques in a short time, which discourages many young people from even trying to learn. So very few members of the younger generation are currently engaged in the transmission of traditional dance ICH. This has led to a lack of transmission subjects for the inheritance and development of traditional dance across Xianyang's districts and counties, resulting in cultural aphasia.

2. Cultural Loss: The Crisis of Extinction Facing Xianyang Traditional Dance

As Kong (2016) notes, "Traditional dance is closely related to the environment in which people live, their relationship with nature, and historical conditions. As people's living environments change, some traditional dances have already begun to disappear." In Xianyang, most surviving traditional dances are transmitted through family lineages or group-based master-apprentice relationships, and are typically performed during festivals and celebratory events. For instance, traditional dance forms such as the Ox-Drawn Drum, Yangge, Bamboo Horse, stilt walking, Core Child, and dragon dance are all primarily performed during the Spring Festival, often as mass participatory activities.

However, due to large-scale population out-migration and the impact of multiculturalism, young people's forms of entertainment and media have continuously increased, and the younger generation has lost interest in traditional dances. As a result, fewer people know how to make the performance props and costumes required for traditional dances, and fewer people have mastered traditional performance forms, vocal repertoires, accompanying music, and basic dance movements. Local traditional dances such as Yangge, Bamboo Horse performance, stilt walking, dragon dance, tiger fighting, and lion dance are no longer the main forms of entertainment during festivals and celebrations, having become neglected non-mainstream activities.

Although local governments have included traditional dances such as Ox-Drawn Drum, Jiaolong Spinning Drum, Sanyuan Old Dragon, Jinghe Bamboo Horse, Dongzhai Eighteen Arhats, and Changwu Backed Core Child in the provincial ICH protection lists, and many traditional dance items have been included in municipal and district/county ICH protection lists, covering different types such as traditional dances in social practices, rituals, and festival activities, they still face numerous problems. These include the destruction of traditional performance environments, limited transmission bases, low social participation, and insufficient funding for transmission. Of course, in many areas, rescue protection of traditional dance ICH projects merely involves the static preservation and display of material carriers such as props and costumes collected from the public, failing

to fundamentally solve the development problems faced by traditional dances in terms of transmission sites and environments.

3. Cultural Decline: The Fading of Cultural Memory in Xianyang Traditional Dance

“Cultural memory refers to the collection of memories and knowledge shared within a specific society or group and passed down from generation to generation. This theory studies how people remember past events and experiences, as well as how these memories influence current culture and society” (You & Wu, 2025). As an important component of the life and emotional memory of Xianyang people, Xianyang traditional dance carries the historical and cultural memory and aesthetic codes of the Xianyang populace. Relying on the unique natural environment and cultural ecological environment, the working people of Xianyang have used dance as a form to record history, depict lifestyles, unite the spiritual will of the people, and express the aesthetic and life aspirations of the populace.

From the powerful and majestic Ox-Drawn Drum to the vivid and lifelike Changwu Backed Core Child, each of these dances is the crystallization of Xianyang’s regional charm and the wisdom of its ancestors. They carry the unique cultural memory of Xianyang’s local culture and manifest the living customs and spiritual beliefs of the Xianyang people. Nowadays, in the context of modernization and globalization, due to rapid economic development and increasingly advanced transportation networks, the traditional ecology of the areas where many of Xianyang’s traditional dances are located has been disrupted. The public’s awareness of protecting traditional dances has gradually weakened, while identity recognition and mindsets have become increasingly complex. Many authentic traditional dance rituals, props, and procedures cannot be restored amidst the continuous changes in the cultural environment, facing cultural decline.

IV. Practical Pathways for the Inheritance and Development of Xianyang Traditional Dance from the Perspective of ICH Protection

Max Weber argued that with the development of science, rationality, and modernity, the world has gradually become disenchanted. “To some extent, intangible cultural heritage has also undergone a process of disenchantment, gradually facing the risk of being forgotten or instrumentalized, while also weakening social cultural identity and cohesion” (Yang & Ma, 2024). From the perspective of intangible cultural heritage protection, the inheritance and development of Xianyang traditional dance as ICH requires strengthening confidence in native culture, creating a cultural ecological environment, and enhancing living heritage practices.

1. Strengthening Confidence in Native Culture and Promoting Inheritance through People’s Production and Daily Life

Most of Xianyang's traditional dances originate from folk culture and have coexisted and co-evolved with local customs, religious beliefs, thoughts, emotions, and aesthetic tastes. They serve not only as entertainment and games for the common people but also as a form of production and way of life. As one scholar notes, "In many so-called economically underdeveloped areas, local art forms are directly derived from traditional production practices. Although some labor patterns and behaviors have later been infused with aesthetic elements and even acquired performative significance, they still remain a natural extension of production and lifestyle and behavior" (Wan, 2016). This determines that the main body of traditional dance is the broad populace, characterized by its life-oriented and collective nature. Whether it is the Ox-Drawn Drum or the Sanyuan Old Dragon, the spectacle of people gathering in droves to dance joyfully is magnificent. Although their cultural connotations and artistic styles differ slightly, they all belong to the category of collectively performed folk dances.

"In maintaining their vitality through inheritance centered on the people, the broad populace engages in impromptu performances such as singing, dancing, acting, storytelling, drumming, and playing music to celebrate harvests, worship ancestors and gods, and pray for disaster relief and blessings. These performances embody their profound spiritual pursuits and rich emotional desires, and through these popular art forms, people's cultural and psychological needs can be satisfied" (Li, 2019). Based on this, the protection of Xianyang's traditional dances should first focus on their life-oriented and collective nature, adhering to inheritance and development on their native soil and within the production and daily life of the people. In recent years, whether through the government's active participation in promoting Xianyang's traditional dances or through advocacy and research from the media and scholars, with the assistance of ICH protection efforts, the public has continuously revised their understanding of traditional dances and continuously strengthened their recognition of these dances as symbols of local culture.

2. Creating a Cultural Ecological Environment to Enrich the Content and Forms of Traditional Dance Performances

"Cultural ecology refers to a complete system composed of variables such as the natural environment, science and technology, livelihood systems, social organizations, and values that influence the emergence and development of culture. It addresses not only the natural ecology but also the coexistence relationships between culture and the aforementioned variables" (Editorial Board of Encyclopedia of China · Sociology, 1991). Throughout history, the emergence and development of Xianyang traditional dance have been closely related to the local natural and humanistic environments.

Taine emphasized that "there is a kind of spiritual climate, namely customs and the spirit of the times, which plays the same role as the natural climate... In both complex and simple cases, it is always the environment—customs and the spirit of the times—that determines the type of artwork" (Taine, 1983, pp. 34-39). The emergence and continuation of Xianyang traditional dance are closely related to meeting the various needs of specific groups and local folk activities. It is necessarily parasitic on specific cultural ecological environments

and related folk contexts. If detached from the soil on which it depends for survival, it will inevitably face the predicament of extinction.

Based on this, for the inheritance and development of Xianyang traditional dance, the key lies in maintaining and creating an appropriate cultural ecological environment. First, local government departments should establish the concept of holistic protection for traditional dance ICH projects. This can be achieved by establishing corresponding cultural ecological protection zones or organizing relevant cultural and art festivals to provide platforms for promoting and displaying traditional dance inheritance and development. Particular attention should be paid to reconstructing cultural ecological environments that have been altered due to urbanization. Second, traditional dance performers and the general audience should enhance their sense of mission. For a long time, influenced by the folk concept of the “three teachings and nine schools of thought” (social hierarchy), many folk performance practitioners often suffered from prejudice. In recent years, with the rising popularity of ICH protection, their social status has also risen accordingly. Performers should strengthen their sense of responsibility and mission as inheritors, making greater efforts to enrich the content and forms of traditional dance performances. Ordinary people should also actively engage with and participate in traditional dance activities in their places of residence, understand their cultural connotations and values, cultivate an appreciation for folk arts, and enable them to develop in daily life.

3. Strengthening Living Heritage Practices and Building Intergenerational Bonds for Traditional Dance

Regarding living heritage practices, Qiao Xiaoguang argues that “folk living cultural resources are not isolated, simple, or superficial art forms, but rather survival behaviors that reflect a need for existence and a temporal order, recreating themes of survival through holistic activities. Intangible cultural heritage achieves communication between the present and the past through living, undeniable, perceptible, and tangible authentic processes” (Qiao, 2004, pp. 15-16). Wang Wenzhang states that “the transmission of intangible cultural heritage exhibits a living and fluid nature, making the sharing of intangible cultural heritage possible, and this is also one of the important differences between intangible cultural heritage and tangible cultural heritage” (Wang, 2013, p55).

From this perspective, the inheritors of Xianyang traditional dance, as the subjects of transmission, should actively teach their skills. Governments, ordinary citizens, social organizations, research scholars, and especially young people, as the subjects of protection, should spontaneously promote, learn, and study these traditions, fostering an atmosphere where "elderly artists are willing to teach and young people are willing to learn," thus achieving living heritage practices.

It is worth noting that in recent years, with the continuous advancement from ICH on campus to ICH in campus, an increasing number of ICH projects have actively expanded their dissemination channels, broken down barriers between circles, and entered campuses and classrooms. However, few traditional dance ICH projects have made their way into schools. Xianyang is rich in higher education resources, including several

universities and colleges such as Xianyang Normal University, Xizang Minzu University, Shaanxi University of Chinese Medicine, Shaanxi Industrial Vocational and Technical University, Shaanxi Vocational College of Finance and Economics, Shaanxi Energy Institute, Shaanxi Post and Telecommunication College, Xianyang Vocational and Technical College, Shaanxi Institute of International Trade and Commerce, Shaanxi Fashion Engineering University, and Haojing College of Shaanxi University of Science and Technology.

If these local Xianyang institutions of higher education, through their long-term educational practices, can actively integrate local history and culture such as Xianyang traditional dance, they may be able to shape this into their own campus cultural characteristics. For example, Xianyang Normal University has integrated Qin and Han War Drums and Jiaolong Spinning Drum into its talent cultivation program for music and dance majors. On this basis, it has specially established the "Qin and Han War Drums Transmission Base" and related research platforms, applied for research projects, and published monographs such as *Research on the Art of Qin and Han War Drums*. This has not only established relationships between older generation artists and young students and teachers that transcend mere skills but has also transformed traditional dance from museum exhibits back into a living, warm way of life, with far-reaching influence. If other institutions of higher education and primary/secondary schools in Xianyang could also introduce Xianyang traditional dance ICH projects as part of their quality cultural education programs, it would greatly benefit both the inheritance of Xianyang folk culture and the enhancement of knowledge and skills among teachers and students at local Xianyang institutions.

V. Conclusion

For any Xianyang traditional dance ICH project, its inheritance and development in the contemporary era imply "survival of the fittest." The likelihood of Xianyang traditional dance remaining active in the lives of contemporary or future people in a completely "traditional" manner is low. Although after Xianyang traditional dance was inscribed on the ICH list, local government protection efforts have, to some extent, stimulated the cultural consciousness of multiple subjects. A large number of media outlets, scholars, industry associations, and local gentry have also intensified their promotion and research of Xianyang traditional dance, inspiring the public's subjective status and cultural consciousness as inheritors of cultural traditions such as traditional dance, and forming an inheritance ecology with broad participation from the people of Xianyang. However, to ensure that Xianyang traditional dance remains vibrant and enduring, it is still necessary to invest thought and energy, continuously exploring development models that suit its adaptation.

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