

Article

Inheritors' Happiness and Its Relevant Factors in Intangible Cultural Heritage

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Abstract: In recent years, more and more ICH (intangible cultural heritage) has been introduced into scenic areas. As the creators and disseminators of ICH, inheritors are invited to teach ICH skills in these areas. According to the PERMA model (positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and achievement), we conducted several interviews with the inheritors of ICH in scenic areas to explore their authentic happiness in terms of the modes by which they inherited and propagated ICH (as individuals, in studios or in companies) and the factors influencing authentic happiness. The findings show that: (1) in general, ICH inheritors reported high levels of authentic happiness in all five dimensions of the PERMA model; (2), for engagement with work, interpersonal relationships, perception of meaning and sense of achievement, the ways in which the inheritors experienced these four dimensions differed greatly depending on the inheritance mode; (3) the main factors affecting the authentic happiness of the inheritors were personal feelings, social attention, policy benefits and economic benefits. (4) inheritors, intangible culture heritage and tourism form an inseparable system, they promote and interact with each other. This paper provides a new perspective for the further development of both ICH inheritors and cultural heritage tourism.

Keywords: intangible cultural heritage; inheritors of intangible cultural heritage; authentic happiness; tourism; PERMA model



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1. Introduction

Forms of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) are considered globally to be national treasures and have long been the focus of study in the field of national culture. Since UNESCO adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003, 630 elements from 139 countries have been included on its Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage [1]. As a key part of cultural heritage, some ICH elements, such as social practices, rituals and festive events, become attractive scenic spots [2]. For example, Chinese Beijing opera and Japanese Kabuki are popular art performances among tourists. In Mexico, the "Day of the Dead" is used by many theme parks to attract tourists. In Egypt, tourists can admire the art of "handmade weaving in Upper Egypt (Sa'eed)".

The premise of ICH tourism development is the protection of ICH. As inheritors are the point in the protection of ICH, conducting research on this group is the top priority in the field of ICH. However, global academic research on ICH has mainly focused on strategies for its protection and development, including protection via archiving [3] as well as museum display [4] and development via tourism [5], commercialisation [6] and industrialisation [7–10]. Since the 21st century, digital technology has also been applied to facilitate the reproduction and dissemination of ICH [11,12]. To implement these protection and development strategies, inheritors of ICH achieve the generation of intangible cultural heritage by mobilizing their physical and mental senses and using certain material tools [13]. ICH inheritance mainly takes the form of community inheritance worldwide [14]. Research on inheritors has mainly focused on the skills and traditional culture of ethnic

minorities [15]. In China, ICH inheritors are a large group with a strong influence on ICH protection and development, a strong initiative to inherit ICH work and strong relationships between generations. Chinese academics have conducted continuous research on this group, mainly focusing on the conceptual definition, classification, identification, protection methods and identity of ICH inheritors [16].

It is worth noting that in worldwide research, scholars usually study ICH inheritors at the group level [17,18]. Therefore, some of the individual-level issues cannot be taken into account. The authentic happiness of the inheritors can reflect the actual inheritance of ICH projects and also enlighten us anew on the protection of ICH. We use the PERMA (positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and achievement) model as the theoretical framework for study, so as to analyse the psychological well-being of the inheritors. In order to study the happiness of inheritors more clearly, we divided ICH inheritors into three types according to the mode by which they inherited and propagated ICH: individual, studio and company. The aim of the study was to record and categorize the differences in happiness among inheritors under three modes and to explore their influencing factors. By combining psychological theory and ICH research to study the inheritors, we hoped to provide new thinking for the current ICH protection work and to promote not only the inheritance of ICH but also the sustainable development of heritage tourism.

2. Literature Review

2.1. ICH and Tourism

ICH generally refers to forms of cultural heritage that are inherited intangibly. There are two major forms of ICH; one is the ICH inherited by the individual, such as stories, ballads, epics, storytelling, music performances and craft skills [19]. This kind of heritage is closely combined with individual intelligence and has distinct personality characteristics. It does not rely on group cooperation; most talent shows and skill inheritances are performed by individuals. It has the cultural attributes of independent expression and inheritance. Another one is the ICH inherited by the community, which has the attribute of group participation. Relying on a broader cultural space, cultural inheritance and enjoyment have a wide range of mass characteristics, such as festivals, temple fairs, group ritual activities, community beliefs, etc. Since the 21st century, there has been a global boom in ICH research, and scholars have successively analysed the concept of ICH both literally and in terms of its cultural connotations [20–22]. While strategies for the protection of ICH have become the main theme of ICH research and general practice, research into ICH has also become increasingly closely related to tourism studies.

Currently, various forms of tourism are emerging, such as “ICH+ museum”, “ICH + homestay”, “ICH + creative cultural products”, “ICH + tourism festival” and “ICH + tourism performing arts”. ICH tourism has become an important part of cultural tourism, and tourism is also regarded as an important way to protect the vitality of ICH [23]. ICH and tourism interact with each other [24]. On the one hand, the impact of ICH on tourism is generally considered to be positive, manifested in promoting economic development, enhancing destination attraction and enhancing cultural identity [25,26]. On the other hand, there are controversies in research on the impact of tourism on ICH. Tourism is a double-edged sword for ICH. Tourism can help cultural revival, increase cross-cultural understanding, promote the learning and dissemination of ICH, provide economic support for ICH protection and enhance people’s awareness and identification of it [27–29]. Furthermore, the application of emerging technologies in tourism contexts, including 3D and AR technologies, has also played an irreplaceable role in recording, restoring and presenting ICH projects, thus communicating ICH to the public in novel ways [12,30]. However, it cannot be ignored that tourism development may also lead to cultural variation, homogeneity and commercialization [31].

2.2. Inheritors of ICH and Well-Being of ICH Inheritors

ICH is a living system, which means that protection activities today should promote not static solidification but continuous development [32]. At the core of this protection are ICH inheritors. Unlike the inheritance of material culture, once the inheritors of ICH disappear, the original form of the ICH will no longer exist. At present, the academic community has not agreed on a clear definition of ICH inheritors. In folklore studies, inheritors are defined as “people who have obtained rich heritage knowledge through their life experience” [33]. Some scholars believe that ICH inheritors are those who represent a profound national and folk cultural tradition, having mastered an exceptional technology. These inheritors are recognised as influential figures in communities and ethnic groups. They are protected by relevant laws [34]. In another instance, UNESCO defined ICH inheritors as members who reproduce, inherit, transform and create a certain culture in their community, whose activities are recognised by the whole community. They can play multiple roles as creators, practitioners and managers of ICH [1].

Scientific classification systems help to identify inheritors, and are therefore conducive to the in-depth study and analysis of these individuals. Currently, the mainstream classification methods in China can be divided into two main categories: classification according to the administrative division level at which the ICH is recognised [35] and that according to the difference between the ICH projects’ inheritance modes or the projects themselves [36]. As a subjective category, the latter type of classification method is different from the former in legal effect. However, the existing classification methods have limitations, meaning that there are still a large number of unclassified ICH inheritors. With the expansion of ICH research, the old classification methods are proving difficult to adapt to the new data. New classification methods are urgently needed.

Three major forms of ICH have been identified in existing research. One of the most widespread and common forms is ICH involving a single cultural attribute, where its inheritance occurs mostly between individuals and is independently expressed [19]. Therefore, some scholars have identified a class of individual inheritors [37]. The individual inheritor takes the individual as the unit in talent shows and skills inheritance, which is the symbol of some specific ICHs. The ICH studio is also an important mode by which ICH is inherited and propagated [38]. Through a studio programme, the Chinese government has proposed to ‘actively promote the modern apprenticeship system, build a number of skilled masters’ studios and encourage representative inheritors to participate in vocational education teaching and research’, thus speeding up the process of ICH inheritor cultivation [39,40]. The studio has become an important means by which inheritance occurs due to its concentrated human resources, distinctive policy advantages and industrial influence. Inheritors enter scenic spots in the form of studio and interact with tourists through on-site exhibitions and product sales, expanding the influence of ICH and enhancing the right of speech of inheritors [41]. Lastly, as a key link in the process of ICH industrialisation, companies also play an important role in ICH development. They are often both the inheritors of traditional skills and the organisers of ICH projects. Company inheritors are most directly related to effective ICH protection through large-scale production [42].

Compared with research focusing on the identification system, classification methods, protection modes and other related details of ICH inheritors [19,34,36,42], there are still few studies focusing on the inheritors themselves. At present, academic studies on the psychological aspects of inheritors mainly focus on social identity, cultural identity and so on [43–45]. The identity of inheritors increases their sense of responsibility, which is conducive to the protection and inheritance of ICH projects. The lack of inheritors’ identity makes them feel vague about their own identity, leading to their loss of enthusiasm and initiative [46]. Starting from the influencing factors, some scholars studied how cultural inheritance, government support and social pressure affect the inheritance intention and value creation of inheritors [47].

However, very few scholars have studied the inheritors comprehensively and carefully from the perspective of well-being. As important representatives of ICH activities, the

psychological well-being of inheritors of ICH directly affects the intention of inheritance. We speculated that happiness plays an important explanatory role in the intention of ICH inheritors to pass on the project in the context of the close combination of ICH and tourism.

Martin Seligman, the father of positive psychology, believed that in the era of happiness 2.0, people are more focused on happiness derived from prosperity and flourishing in life [48]. Authentic happiness theory examines the diversity of the positive emotions experienced. Three main sources of happiness are identified: happiness as pleasure, happiness as engagement and happiness as meaning [49]. Happiness as pleasure is the most basic and the least fulfilling form of happiness. This kind of happiness is spontaneous and unabiding. Next, happiness as engagement provides an opportunity to regulate happiness with more intention. It can mostly be gained by actively participating in certain enjoyable activities. Lastly comes happiness as meaning, which lasts much longer than the first two. This is a stage filled with abundant positive affect, where deeper understandings are achieved, and emotional complexity is expressed. Meaning gives way to selfless ideals and relationships that produce fulfilled satisfaction when pleasure may be swayed by events categorized as good and bad [49–51]. Like happiness, well-being is a slippery concept that is applied broadly in popular culture, research and policy-making [52]. How to measure well-being is one of the main concerns of academia. Academics currently divide measurement indicators into two general categories: one category is subjective indicators (e.g., people's personal overall feelings of happiness), and the other is objective indicators (e.g., income, health and living standards) [53]. As a group that plays a unique role in cultural construction, ICH inheritors may perceive significance and achievement differently from other people. They may be more eager to obtain inner happiness and spiritual joy. As inheritors are the drivers of ICH development, their individual happiness and its influencing factors reflect the current environment in which ICH development is taking place, as well as the intention of ICH inheritors to pass on the project. Accordingly, to investigate these matters, we used the PERMA model of authentic happiness as the theoretical framework for this study [48,54].

3. Research Design

3.1. Research Contexts

In order to explore the well-being of inheritors in ICH against the background of tourism, Zhejiang Province was selected as the research background. Zhejiang Province's intangible culture and tourism development are in a leading position in China. Hangzhou, Ningbo and Huzhou in Zhejiang Province are all cities with strong historical and cultural legacies. Their unique regional cultures have nurtured invaluable local ICH. In terms of the number of items selected for the national ICH directory, the improvement of protection mechanisms, the construction of relevant policies and regulations and the formation of protection management agencies, these three cities are all national leaders. In the 2019 Zhejiang Province Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection and Development Index Evaluation, Hangzhou, Ningbo and Huzhou ranked first, fourth and ninth respectively [55]. It is thus potentially powerful and meaningful to select these cities as the research contexts to evaluate the psychological well-being of inheritors.

3.2. Research Methods

We conducted our research at the three sites between October 2021 and February 2022. In preparation, we collected relevant information about ICH inheritors at the three sites on the official website of ICH, such as their basic information, the specific ICH craft that they had learned, their work process and key works. When selecting ICH inheritors, in order to ensure the diversity and representativeness of the sample, we comprehensively considered multiple factors, such as the inheritor's skill level, age, skill type and the difficulty of contacting them. In the end, we selected a total of 30 inheritors from the inheritors in Zhejiang Province. We contacted the inheritors through official channels of communication in advance and arranged interview times. Due to uncontrollable factors, some inheritors were not contacted, so we finally conducted 23 interviews (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Inheritors in the scenic areas. **Source:** All photos taken by the authors. The interviewees gave their consent for the pictures to be taken and published.

We used the methods of observation and semi-structured interview to carry out our research. Specifically, we used immersive observation, for which we situated ourselves in the settings of observation [56]. We first observed the environments in which the ICH inheritors lived, capturing the expressions and body language of ICH inheritors during the interview. We formed photos and texts of the recorded contents, then finally summarized the results. This process ensured that we could record the relatively authentic behaviour, living environment and behaviour of the ICH inheritors in a natural environment. The collected results are the basis for our classification of inheritors, which is helpful for further analysis.

Then, we conducted interviews according to the interview outline prepared in advance and the actual situation during the interview. The interview outline adopted the PERMA model, in which the positive emotions mainly focus on the inheritors' attitudes and psychological states in the face of an inheritance predicament. The sense of participation mainly focuses on the inheritance experience and the inheritors' mode of inheritance. The relationship focuses on the relationship between the inheritors, audiences and relevant parties (such as neighbours, tourists, tourism enterprises, government, etc.) of ICH skills and works. The meaning focuses on the significance of intangible inheritance itself and the inheritors' views on the prospect of skills. The sense of achievement focuses on the achievement of goals and the acquisition of pride in the process of inheritance.

3.3. Data Collection

We continued interviewing inheritors until we found it difficult to obtain new viewpoints, which indicated that we had reached data saturation. In total, we interviewed 23 ICH inheritors (2 recognised at the national level, 6 at the provincial level, 4 at the municipal level, 3 at the district/county level and 8 at other levels). Each interview lasted 30–60 min (Table 1). According to the mode by which they inherited and propagated ICH, we divided the inheritors into three groups: individual, studio and company. (1) Independent inheritors were classified under the individual inheritance mode. This group had the smallest scale and simplest ICH operating procedure among the three modes. I1, the inheritor of Jilihu silk handicraft skills, worked alone, neither starting a company nor working in a government-funded studio. (2) Inheritors under the studio inheritance mode worked in ICH masters' studios that were established in cooperation with the government. ICH skills were taught via apprenticeships. For example, S7, the inheritor of gold and silver embroidery, had her own studio in Ningbo, which was funded by the district government and open to the public. (3) Under the company inheritance mode, inheritors operated large-scale ICH product manufacturing enterprises that were registered as limited companies [57]. For example, C2, the inheritor of Yue Kiln celadon firing skills, was in charge of a limited company which had formed a large-scale production. It was divided into a production department, a sales department and a financial department, with clear divisions of labour. Inheritors under this mode were usually recruited through open recruitment. After collecting our data, we transcribed the interview recordings into texts. We then coded the texts according to the modes by which the inheritors worked and the administrative

division level in descending order: individual inheritors I1–I8, studio inheritors S1–S7 and company inheritors C1–C8.

Table 1. Demographic information of the interviewees.

Mode	Code	Age (Years)	Education Level	Inheritor Level	Income Per Month
Individual	1	Above 56	High school/Secondary technical school	National level	Under 3000
	2	46–55	Under junior high school	Provincial level	5001–10,000
	3	Above 56	High school/Secondary technical school	Provincial level	3001–5000
	4	46–55	Under junior high school	Other	Under 3000
	5	Above 56	Under junior high school	Other	Under 3000
	6	21–35	Under junior high school	Other	Under 3000
	7	46–55	Under junior high school	Other	Under 3000
	8	46–55	Unknown	Other	5001–10,000
Studio	1	Above 56	Under junior high school	Provincial level	Unknown
	2	Above 56	Unknown	Provincial level	10,001–20,000
	3	Above 56	Under junior high school	Provincial level	Unknown
	4	Above 56	Under junior high school	Municipal level	3001–5000
	5	Above 56	Junior colleges/Undergraduates	Municipal level	5001–10,000
	6	46–55	Unknown	District/County level	Unknown
	7	Above 56	High school/Secondary technical school	District/County level	Unknown
Company	1	Above 56	Junior colleges/Undergraduates	National level	Above 20,000
	2	36–45	Graduate or above	Provincial level	Above 20,000
	3	Above 56	Under junior high school	Municipal level	Above 20,000
	4	36–45	Under junior high school	Municipal level	Unknown
	5	Above 56	Under junior high school	District/County level	Unknown
	6	21–35	Junior colleges/Undergraduates	Other	10,001–20,000
	7	21–35	Junior colleges/Undergraduates	Other	Under 3000
	8	46–55	Graduate or above	Other	Under 3000

We found that the interviewed inheritors had different demographic characteristics depending on the inheritance mode (Table 1). Individual inheritors varied widely in age (from 21 to >56 years) and had a lower education level in general than studio and company inheritors. More than half of these inheritors were “other” level inheritors who had not yet been recognised and approved by the cultural administrative department, but still engaged in ICH activities. Therefore, the social influence and cultural benefits of these inheritors were the weakest among the three modes, and their average monthly incomes were low- to middle-level. Under the studio mode, inheritors aged 56 years or above accounted for more than 80% of the group, and most inheritors had junior or senior middle school education. Their inheritor levels were mainly provincial or municipal, and their average monthly incomes were middle-level. Finally, the age distribution of the company ICH inheritors was relatively uniform across the group (from 21 to >56 years). Their education levels were the highest among the three modes of inheritors, including at the postgraduate level or above. Most of these inheritors had higher income levels.

3.4. Data Analysis

After collecting our data, we used thematic analysis to identify the dimensions and relevant influencing factors of the ICH inheritors’ authentic happiness under the three modes. Thematic analysis is a commonly used qualitative research method. It consists of deriving descriptive codes, then interpretive codes from the data, and lastly, extracting the final themes [58].

To reduce ambiguity and deviation, researchers put on-site interview record voice and text into a text, and proofread and complement, eventually formed a total of 23 textual data totaling about 100,000 words. By reading the interview transcripts, turn key statements into conceptualized keywords. Through open coding, about 150 sentence entries are obtained. Then, through summarizing and merging the similar or related concepts, 30 important concepts are finally formed. Finally, they were divided into five dimensions by induction

(Table 2). Meanwhile, to strengthen the reliability of findings of this study, the research team members have cross checked the textual data, keywords, and related concepts in the coding process. In order to further explore the influencing factors of inheritors' well-being, researchers conducted secondary coding through the same method and formed 14 important concepts, which were finally summarized into four influencing factors.

Table 2. The coding process of the PERMA model in five dimensions.

Dimensions	Keywords	Frequencies/ Total Number	Samples
Positive emotion (44)	Interested	22/44	From the moment I entered the unit, I didn't think about changing jobs; I'm very interested in it. (I2)
	Love	10/44	It is because I love this craft from the bottom of my heart that I have always been able to do it until now. (I7)
	Enjoyment	9/44	I really enjoy the whole process of making stone sculptures. (S3)
Engagement (32)
	Participation	16/32	After graduating from college, I developed a keen interest in and enthusiasm for participating in this craft. (C2)
	Effort	8/32	When I first came into contact with the ink brushes, I spent a long time identifying various raw materials and familiarizing myself with the production process of different raw materials. (C6)
Relationship (28)	Concentration	5/32	Usually, I am fully devoted to my work until I have finished a piece. (C8)

	Communication	9/28	I have more opportunities to communicate with children because I open some ICH training classes. (C8)
Meaning (20)	Circle of friends	6/28	Since I started inheriting ICH, I have come into contact with artisans and craftsmen . The people around me have changed. (C2)

	Responsibility	9/20	When I got involved in the inheritance of "Hu writing brush" making skills, I felt that I shouldered a huge responsibility . (I4)
Achievement (30)	Fulfilled	4/20	The inheritance of "Yue kiln celadon" is the biggest thing in my life, which makes me feel very satisfied . (C2)
	Value	3/20	I feel I am doing something worthwhile and I am having a great time doing it. (C1)

Achievement (30)	Recognition	6/30	Some of my works have been collected in the Great Hall of the People, and it is very rewarding for me to receive such recognition . (C4)
	Influence	5/30	I am willing to display some of my finished works. They can impress tourists and customers while also giving them some new ideas . (C1)
	Hardship	4/30	To carve on the building, we had to work outside for more than seven hours almost every day , even on rainy days. These experiences have shaped my present exquisite carving skills. (S1)

4. Results

4.1. Authentic Happiness of ICH Inheritors under Different Inheritance Modes

Positive emotions: Positive emotions refer to felicity, hope, happiness, satisfaction, interest and other good emotions [59,60]. Overall, the majority of inheritors reported feeling more positive, optimistic and satisfied than before. Specifically, five individual inheritors (63%), seven studio inheritors (100%) and seven company inheritors (88%) used words and phrases directly related to positive emotions. For example, C8 stated that "I used to work in

foreign trade. At first . . . when I resigned to run our team, I had a lot of pressure. But when I saw the light in everyone's eyes after coming into contact with the intangible cultural heritage, I thought that everything was worthwhile" (C8). However, the individual inheritors reported slightly less positive emotional experiences than the studio and company inheritors. Some individual inheritors directly expressed negative emotions: "No, the country seems to be protecting and inheriting these traditional cultures, but the plans have not been put into practice. We artisans cannot even survive" (I5). Although the government has subsidized ICH inheritors whom they recognise in terms of administrative division levels, inheritors without this recognition do not benefit from the subsidies, and their quality of life has not been significantly improved. In addition, the low added value of handmade products and the competition for the market from mechanization are creating high pressure that is threatening even the survival of these inheritors.

Engagement: When individuals are fully devoted to carrying out an activity, they can achieve higher work efficiency, life satisfaction and authentic happiness [61]. The ICH inheritors generally reported relatively high levels of engagement in their ICH work, but participated in different forms depending on the inheritance mode.

Most of the individual inheritors interviewed worked in areas with unique ICH, such as Shanlian Town, which has a strong Hu writing brush cultural atmosphere, and Nanxun Town, which is famed for its unique Jiliu silk production. These inheritors were locals and had been influenced to have a strong interest in their respective ICH since childhood: "All my family members make ink brushes. My parents taught me about the craft of making ink brushes from a young age. I've been involved in this skill for decades now" (I3). There were individual inheritors who were employed by others, as well as self-employed inheritors. As their quality of life and income levels were affected by factors such as their own skill levels and social statuses, there were large differences in these measures between individuals.

Most of the studio inheritors became attached to ICH due to discovering an interest in it in their youth. They had generally engaged in ICH work for longer than the individual and company inheritors. As the incomes of most ICH studios were not stable, the material living standards of these inheritors had not greatly improved. However, the majority of these inheritors were over 50 years old and could support their ICH incomes with retirement salaries and financial support from their children. Studio ICH work mainly consisted of teaching, producing customers' orders and participating in relevant social activities.

The company inheritors gained access to ICH skills via more diverse channels and were mostly highly educated. Some were influenced by their families since childhood, while some studied with great concentration for many years with their senior masters. They promoted ICH by actively cooperating with other social groups and using multiple channels. A portion of inheritors enjoyed fewer economic benefits than before and experienced a decrease in material quality of life. However, the inheritors were sincerely happy to work in the field of ICH: "I like to do carving, sometimes I forget the time when I do it, I stay here all day, but I don't feel tired, I turn a craft I like into a career, I can do it for a lifetime, without retirement" (C4).

Relationships: Personal relationships are the sum total of various social relationships generated in the process of interpersonal communication. Good personal relationships can improve inheritors' sense of social belonging, thus helping them maintain stable psychological states and lives. In general, more than twenty interviewees were satisfied with their existing personal relationships.

Under the individual mode, six inheritors (75%) indicated that most people they had contact with were practitioners in the same ICH industry, and that their social circles did not change much. Under the studio mode, six inheritors (86%) expressed that they mostly socialised with people who were interested in ICH, especially children and adolescents. Under the company mode, four inheritors (50%) said that their circle of friends had undergone significant changes: "My circle of friends has definitely changed. In the past, everyone I knew was engaged in sports, such as gym coaches and physical education teachers. But now, all the people I meet are craftsmen" (C2). These changes were mainly caused by their career changes

into ICH fields. C6 further expressed that *“we have already become disconnected from the lives of our peers”*. In summary, our results showed that the inheritors’ personal relationships mostly revolved around their ICH work.

Meaning: Research has shown that working with meaning can make individuals feel that their lives are worthwhile and fulfilled, which relates closely to their life satisfaction and physical health [54,62]. Our interview data show that inheritors working under all three inheritance modes attached a strong sense of meaning to their work.

Six individual inheritors (75%), five studio inheritors (57%) and eight company inheritors (100%) mentioned that their crafts should be passed on well. They generally believed that ICH forms were cultural treasures that had to be protected and propagated from generation to generation through multiple channels. Four of the company inheritors (50%) mentioned a change in mindset. They now not only regarded ICH skills as necessary for the maintenance of their livelihoods, but also as their responsibility to protect and promote, as well as the basis of a lifelong career. For example, C4 stated that *“now I’m not just doing it to improve my life. I’m doing it thoughtfully. I want to make something good to pass on to the next generation. I hope to pass it on and prevent its extinction, it is a duty for me”* (C4).

In addition, age affected the inheritors’ perceptions of meaning. Some young and middle-aged inheritors regarded their ICH work as only a means with which to make a living, due to having engaged in this work for only a short period of time. In contrast, most of the elderly inheritors had participated in ICH work for a long time, and ICH was of great significance to this group: *“This skill was originally a job for me, but in the process of inheritance, ICH became an important part of my life. I get a lot of insight from the process”* (I3).

Achievement: Having a sense of achievement allows people to perceive their activities as meaningful and feel productive in their lives. Our interview data reveal that working with ICH gave inheritors under all three modes a sense of achievement to certain degrees.

This sense of achievement manifested in three forms. First, the inheritors gained a sense of achievement from promoting ICH skills. By increasing the number of people to whom ICH was disseminated and receiving their recognition in the process, the inheritors felt a sense of accomplishment and became more willing to promote ICH: *“Many children like to do dough sculpting. Our courses in all schools are overloaded with registrants. After finishing their work, the children feel a sense of accomplishment. As a teacher, I am also very happy . . . ”* (S6).

Second, the inheritors gained a sense of achievement from successfully making a piece of ICH work through exploration and improvement. As the inheritors had to keep pace with the times and produce works that were current, such exploration and improvement were necessary. The work process from initial conception to completion of the final version also brought the inheritors a sense of achievement.

Third, the inheritors gained a sense of achievement from scaling up the dissemination of ICH. Starting as apprentices, the inheritors gradually improved their skills and became masters. During this process, the inheritors expanded the production scale of their craft, enhanced the social influence of the ICH and taught and publicised their craft to more people. This kind of perceived achievement was particularly evident from the testimonies of the company inheritors: *“I have witnessed the incremental progress of our factory. It’s one of the things I’m most proud of in my life. So I think that I can make celadon with the Yue Kiln celadon technique at the quality level and the production scale of ancient times again”* (C2).

4.2. Factors Influencing Authentic Happiness of ICH Inheritors under Different Inheritance Modes

Various factors influenced the authentic happiness of the interviewed ICH inheritors. We extracted 14 key points from our data and grouped these points under four core categories, namely, personal feelings, social attention, policy benefits and economic benefits (Figure 2).

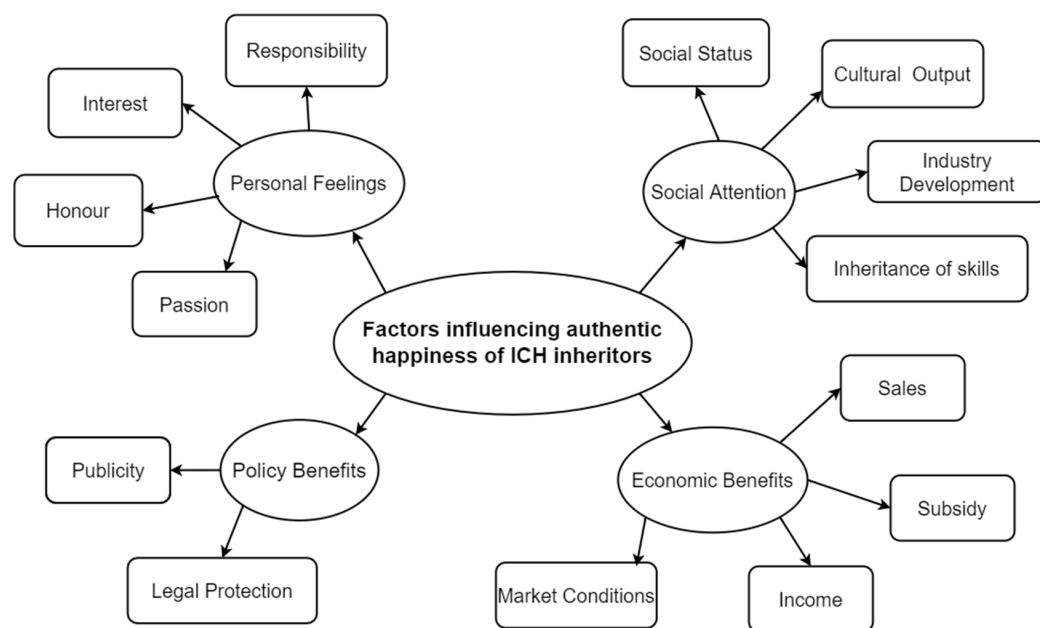


Figure 2. Factors influencing authentic happiness of ICH inheritors.

Personal feelings: The interviewees' feelings towards their ICH craft affected their drive to undertake ICH work to great extents. During their interviews, many ICH inheritors mentioned "passion", "like" and other similar words. Most of the inheritors had had experience with their ICH since childhood, and thus developed a deep affection for their craft. Moreover, many had developed their passion into a career: *"I started out learning because I liked it. Now the ICH is not only a hobby for me, but also my career. It is a good thing to develop my hobby into a career"* (C5). Concentrating on craftsmanship also brought them a sense of honour, as well as a sense of responsibility and the drive to pass on their ICH. These emotions motivated the inheritors to overcome difficulties and consistently dig deeper into their field.

Social attention: ICH should not only "go on", but also "go out" into the wider community. The respondents observed that with the increase in national policies and media publicity concerning ICH, as well as the continuing development of promotional activities, such as introduction of ICH into schools and ICH exhibitions, more and more people, especially the younger generations, were paying attention to ICH. *"I am now in the Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition Hall, I can meet more people who are interested in intangible cultural heritage, every day there are so many children coming and going, and I'm happy to see so many people who want to know about intangible cultural heritage"* (S7). To most inheritors, the expansion of their influence, the increase in attention paid to the ICH and the increase in social recognition all promoted the happiness of the wider public, thus adding to their own happiness derived from their inheritance of ICH.

However, some interviewees said that ICH was still being paid a low level of social attention. They believed that young people did not understand nor recognise the value of ICH, and that few people were really willing to learn about it. Therefore, there was a shortage of inheritors. In addition, they noted that modern technology was gradually decreasing the relevance of ICH in society and reducing the demand for ICH products. In the face of this situation, the inheritors expressed their sorrow and regret: *"With the development of high technology in the future, no one will learn our skills, so our skills may become antiques and only be seen in museums"* (C4).

Policy benefits: As the leader of efforts to protect and promote ICH in China, the national government plays an irreplaceable role in determining the policies, regulations and organisational arrangements for ICH. Nowadays, the government has gradually strengthened its protection of inheritors. While constantly introducing and improving the

issue of laws and regulations, the government also continued the publicity and promotion of ICH, such as by holding exhibitions and press conferences from time to time.

Most interviewees said that the government's policies and promotional activities had effectively improved their quality of life, but a small number said that *"at present, the country still pays superficial attention to the development of the handicraft industry, but how to save the declining handicraft industry is actually very critical"* (I5).

Economic benefits: In addition to policy improvements, the country also provides financial support for the inheritors of ICH. The government provides financial support to inheritors of different levels according to uniform standards, as well as grant project subsidies to inheritors participating in projects or competitions. These subsidies constitute an important part of the monthly income of some inheritors.

Another aspect that affects economic benefits is the sale of ICH products. Due to high prices and few customers, the sales of some products were relatively poor. In addition, increasing the production scale of handmade products was difficult; therefore, the economic benefits of ICH work were not stable: *"Now mechanized production is developed, and the benefits of mechanical production are much greater than those of manual production, while manual production cannot be achieved in large quantities"* (I1).

5. Discussion

The first aim of this study was to compare the psychological well-being of inheritors under three different modes. It was found that the happiness of each of the three types of inheritors had something in common, but there were also differences (Table 3).

Table 3. Comparative analysis of ICH inheritors' authentic happiness.

Dimensions of Authentic Happiness	Types of ICH Inheritors		
	Individual	Studio	Company
Positive emotions	Passion; Fewer young people interested; Willingness of giving up	Passion; Fewer inheritors; Improving life satisfaction	Passion; Difficulties in operating the company
Engagement	High degree of participation; Great environmental impact; Great individual differences in living standards	High degree of participation; High degree of freedom; Unstable income	High degree of participation; Great social influence; Diversified promotion methods; Diversified reasons for initial contact with ICH
Positive relationships	Relationships with others in the same industry	Relationships with others in the same industry; Adolescents interested in ICH	Diverse social groups; Large circle of friends
Meaning	Means of livelihood; Inheriting traditional culture	Interest; A part of life; Inheriting traditional culture	Responsibility; Lifelong career; Inheriting traditional culture
Achievement	Inheriting ICH skills; Gaining recognition; Carrying forward traditional culture	Inheriting ICH skills; Making an artwork; Teaching children	Inheriting ICH skills; Gaining recognition; Expanding the scope of dissemination

On the one hand, in the three dimensions of positive emotion, engagement and relationship, the attitude of the inheritors was consistent. ICH inheritors generally experienced higher levels of positive emotions, and they all reported a high level of engagement with their work. Most of the inheritors had engaged in spiritual and cultural activities for a long time, which may have led their spiritual pursuits to exceed their material pursuits [36]. For inheritors, ICH skills were not only the basis of their jobs, but also one of the main sources of their value and significance. The inheritors were generally more satisfied with their

existing interpersonal relationships, possibly because there was almost no competition between the inheritors and the groups with whom they socialised.

On the other hand, the three types of inheritors showed obvious differences in source of engagement, meaning and achievement. Differences in forms of engagement were mainly related to the inheritors' channels of initial contact with their ICH, the length of period of engagement, the training of inheritors, publicity measures and life quality. The inheritors' perceptions of meaning varied from person to person. Some individual inheritors only regarded ICH as a means of livelihood, while most inheritors under the studio and company modes regarded ICH work as their lifelong career. As for achievement, the individual inheritors mostly gained a sense of achievement from inheriting ICH, while the studio and company inheritors mainly gained this kind of sense from producing works and teaching students and scaling up the dissemination of ICH, respectively.

The second aim of this study was to find out which factors affect the well-being of inheritors and examine how these factors shape well-being. Multiple factors influenced the ICH inheritors' authentic happiness, which can be divided into personal feelings, social attention, policy benefits and economic benefits.

First of all, individual inheritors were mainly affected by personal feelings, policy and economic benefits. For this type of inheritor, happiness was closely related to material standard of living. Inheritors cared more about whether the ICH activities brought them substantial material benefits. These factors also had different effects on the inheritors with different years of inheritance. Individual inheritors with rich inheritance experience had fixed income levels and a certain degree of financial stability. They were also valued by the government and cultural and tourism circles. They had a higher level of happiness. However, most of the other individual inheritors had low income levels and were seldom eligible for the government subsidies. Their enthusiasm for ICH was easily discouraged. Individual inheritors are the most numerous and widely distributed in the whole group of inheritors. They play a fundamental role in the development of ICH. Therefore, in order to protect the inheritors' groups, we must pay attention to the psychological well-being of this type of inheritor.

Furthermore, the studio inheritors were mainly influenced by personal emotions and social attention. The studio mode can be regarded as the product of the development of individual inheritors to a certain stage. When individual inheritors have accumulated a certain social reputation, they will organize into small ICH groups. Inheritors under studio mode placed more emphasis on the high-quality development of ICH than simply carrying out inheritance activities. As their quality of life was basically guaranteed, they could pay more attention to expanding the social influence of ICH. The positive feedback from the outside and the positive incentive of emotions can improve the happiness of these inheritors and contribute to their inheritance activities.

Finally, the company inheritors were mainly influenced by social attention, policy and economic benefits. As studios got bigger and bigger, they became an organization of scale. The inheritors under company mode usually held important positions within the company. They had to assume greater social responsibilities and consider the long-term development of the whole company. In this process, the public's attention had a positive impact on the livelihoods of the inheritors and the longevity of their ICH projects, a finding that echoes the research on the role of relationships in promoting the dissemination of ICH in the context of new media [36,63]. Positive policy, on the one hand, helps the company to make strategic decisions; on the other hand, it can also bring preferential policy support for the company. The economic benefits of ICH are directly reflected in the profits. Under the company mode, inheritors mainly paid attention to the sales of finished products and the market conditions for ICH. Their goal was to promote traditional culture while selling ICH products, so as to achieve economic and social benefits.

The third aim of this study was to clarify the dynamic relationship between ICH, tourism and inheritors (Figure 3). Relying on the bond of well-being, ICH and inheritors constitute a dynamic system of mutual influence: inheriting ICH can improve the authentic

happiness of inheritors; in turn, the improvement of happiness enables the inheritors to continue to inherit and develop intangible heritage skills and culture [17].

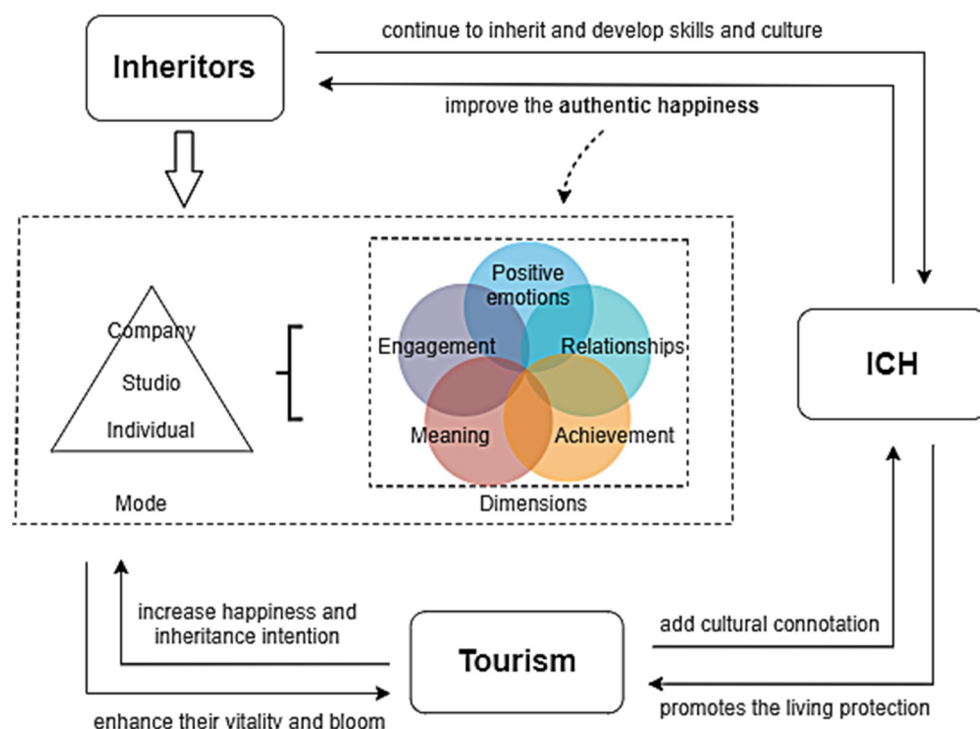


Figure 3. Dynamic relationships among ICH, inheritors and tourism.

In the field of tourism, the collision between ICH and tourism is an effective living inheritance. First of all, tourism promotes the protection of ICH, and ICH also contributes to the promotion of tourism cultural connotation. Tourism activities are a way to transform cultural resources. The combination of ICH and tourism can bring more economic benefits to the scenic spot. In addition, it can also expand the popularity of traditional cultures and enable more people to contact ICH, especially those ICHs on the verge of extinction.

Secondly, inheritors of ICH are direct beneficiaries of the development of ICH tourism. Rather than supporting themselves solely by their own craftsmanship, these inheritors can earn higher economic income by engaging in ICH inheritance in scenic areas. This can also enhance their psychological well-being and willingness to inherit. ICH inheritors and tourist destinations interact with each other so that ICH once again radiates its unique and time-honoured original charm in the new era [64]. The tourism industry also becomes more diversified because of these inheritors. Therefore, this study further illustrates the relationship between ICH and tourism, and creatively puts forward the unique role of inheritors in tourism. The three form an inseparable system.

6. Conclusions and Implications

The above study indicates that a higher sense of authentic happiness in inheritors can promote the conservation of ICH and the sustainable development of ICH tourism. However, some inheritors experienced relatively low levels of happiness due to the difficulties posed by exclusion from government subsidies, low levels of social attention paid to ICH and unstable economic benefits [65]. It is therefore urgent for inheritors, the government and society to take effective measures to solve these problems and promote the long-term continuation and development of ICH.

From the perspective of inheritors, the inheritance of ICH is in need of not only the tourism market, but also innovation to keep up with the times. For example, manufacturing the Hu writing brush of Shanlian, a national-level ICH, is an especially valuable skill because of the complex production process and the necessity of sourcing raw materials

from wild animals. Due to the restrictions posed by national laws and sales channels, it is increasingly difficult to obtain the necessary raw materials. As a result, the production cost has increased and the profits have dropped sharply. In the face of this situation, inheritors could learn from the marketing method of individual inheritor I3: first, they could sell customized brushes according to the preferences of young people; second, they could auction off brushes in e-commerce live broadcasts. These methods not only improve the economic benefits for the inheritors, but also effectively promote their ICH, thus also allowing them to achieve cultural benefits.

Society should improve its awareness of the importance of ICH protection, support the relevant national policies and actively participate in the relevant activities organised by social organisations. Scenic spots at all levels should make full use of special festivals such as “Cultural and Natural Heritage Day” to create intangible cultural heritage propaganda plates and to make tourists fully interact with inheritors of ICH. The public should also use new media technologies to promote ICH on social platforms and promote traditional Chinese culture and skills internationally. In addition, educators could add more content about ICH into textbooks and regularly organise events where students can watch performances of ICH projects to further publicise and expand the audience of ICH.

The government could improve the standardisation and unification of the system by which inheritors are evaluated, change the way they are identified only by expert group according to the various evaluation materials reported, increase the number of field visits to ICH sites and allow more inheritors to enjoy the benefits of their protection system. The government should also strictly implement their existing support policies and adopt the “material + spirit” double incentive method to improve inheritors’ authentic happiness and quality of life. The government should also continue to promote activities such as the introduction of ICH into schools and scenic areas, as well as set up an ICH fund to encourage and support children and adolescents in their efforts to learn and eventually inherit ICH. Lastly, the government should combine ICH elements with souvenirs and articles of daily use so that ICH can be integrated into every corner of social life.

It should be noted that in the whole process of promoting the protection of ICH, the interests of the inheritors and local people must be put first. As tourism has affected many less educated communities, most locals have no idea what the new system of ICH means, what to do or how to get involved. Therefore, the government must fully respect the willingness of inheritors themselves and local communities, send a specially assigned person to popularize the significance of the application of ICH projects and tourism development to the local people and coordinate different opinions from all parties. At the same time, the government should also strive to enhance the discourse rights of ICH inheritors and local people and listen to the opinions of inheritors in the decision-making for community public affairs related to culture. In this way, the public can truly feel the meaning of their existence, so as to motivate inheritors among the masses to involve them in upholding the values of ICH.

This study has made some theoretical contributions. First, this paper extends the application of Seligman’s PERMA model to ICH inheritance and the field of tourism by discussing the interaction between ICH and tourism, which differs substantially from previous application fields, such as clinical medicine and mental health education. Second, this study classifies inheritors into three types according to the mode of inheritance: individual, studio and company inheritance. In this way, the study breaks new ground and provides researchers with another option other than the previous systems of dividing inheritors according to their region or ICH project. Finally, this paper presents a new research perspective by discussing the influences of different factors on inheritors’ authentic happiness under different inheritance modes.

There are some limitations to this research that could be improved on in follow-up studies. First, only small differences were found in certain dimensions of authentic happiness (such as positive emotions) between the three inheritance modes, which made it difficult to distinguish between the modes in terms of those dimensions. Future studies

could adopt more rigorous research designs. Second, qualitative content analysis was mainly used in this exploratory study to compare and analyse the inheritors' authentic happiness under the three modes and to inspect the specific influencing factors. Our findings could be empirically tested with the PERMA model scale in subsequent studies. Third, this study mainly focused on ICH inheritors aged 56 years and above, while ICH inheritors aged 20 years and below were not included due to the small number of inheritors in this age range and the difficulty of finding them. Fourth, as our research participants were all inheritors in various scenic spots in Zhejiang Province, the research results likely only apply to ICH inheritance in Zhejiang Province. Future research should increase the sample size and diversity in terms of age distribution. Other regions could also be included to produce more comprehensive and universal research results.

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