Economic Society and Humanities Vol. 3 No. 7, 2026

Research on the Practice Model and Development Path of "Intangible Cultural Heritage + Tourism" from the Perspective of Tourist Behavioral Psychology Science: A Case Study of Tianjin

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Abstract: Against the backdrop of building a strong cultural nation and deepening the integration of culture and tourism, the combination of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and tourism is critical for ICH dynamic inheritance and high-quality regional tourism development. From the perspective of tourist behavioral psychology, this paper takes Tianjin as a case to explore innovative practice models and sustainable paths for ICH tourism by examining the formation mechanism of tourists' behavioral tendencies and preferences. Using mixed methods of literature analysis and field research, this study collects statistical and case data and builds a multi-dimensional analytical model rooted in behavioral psychology planning-decision theory centered on tourists' cognitive, affective and behavioral psychological mechanisms to assess "ICH + tourism" integration of Tianjin. The results show that Tianjin has developed six ICH-tourism modes: museum exhibitions, stage performances, folk-custom experiences, park clusters, festival events and practice bases. Targeted optimization strategies are put forward, including developing suitable cultural-creative products, designing participatory brand activities, shaping distinctive regional cultural styles and adopting digital technologies to satisfy tourists' personalized experience demands and promote local ICH revitalization. This research enriches the theoretical system of ICH-tourism integration and offers practical references for regional cultural revitalization and sustainable cultural-tourism development.

Keywords: Intangible Cultural Heritage; Tourism; Integration of Culture and Tourism; Tianjin; Innovative Development

1. Introduction

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism of China issued the "Notice on Promoting the Deep Integration and Development of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Tourism" in February 2023, providing guidance and direction for the creation of new "intangible cultural heritage + cultural tourism" business models in various regions. Scattered across the vast Chinese land, intangible cultural heritage is an important part of China's fine traditional culture, embodying Chinese wisdom and experience, and endowing each region with unique charm and character. We should promote the in-depth integration and development of culture and tourism by shaping tourism with culture and highlighting culture through tourism. Intangible cultural heritage, as an important living cultural resource, not only carries a profound history but also connects people's production and life, permeating their clothing, food, housing and transportation. The integration and development with tourism has a natural fit. On the one hand, intangible cultural heritage is an important tourism resource that can greatly enrich the cultural connotation of the tourism industry and better meet the spiritual and cultural needs of tourists. On the other hand, tourism, as a cultural-level life experience, not only provides diversified practical and application scenarios for intangible cultural heritage but also builds an important channel for its protection and inheritance [1]. It can be said that "intangible cultural heritage + tourism" are a perfect match and have become an important part of the integration and development of cultural and tourism industries.

2. Overview of Intangible Cultural Heritage Resources in Tianjin and the Current Situation of Intangible Cultural Heritage Tourism Development

Tianjin is located at the confluence of nine rivers and is not only the largest port city in northern

China but also an important part of the Grand Canal Cultural Belt. Through the development of modern industry and commerce and the collision of Chinese and Western cultures, it has formed a unique urban style that combines Chinese and Western elements and integrates ancient and modern features. It is renowned as "A Century of China in Tianjin". With over six hundred years of historical and cultural heritage and the integration of scholars, farmers, artisans, and merchants through the Grand Canal, Tianjin has a rich and diverse intangible cultural heritage, nurturing the profound cultural heritage of the Jingu region. Tianjin is known as the hometown of northern Chinese folk art, where many forms of folk art originated, flourished, and developed, such as Jingdong Drum, Tianjin Tunes, crosstalk, and fast-paced rhymes. Traditional folk crafts, such as Yangliuqing New Year woodblock prints, Ni Renzhang's colored clay figurines, and Wei's kites, are well-known both at home and abroad [2]. The intangible cultural heritage of food, such as Goubuli buns, Shiba Street twisted dough sticks, and Erduoyan fried cakes, are also famous far and wide. As of the beginning of 2024, Tianjin has 47 national-level and 357 municipal-level representative projects of intangible cultural heritage, covering various categories including folk literature, traditional music, traditional dance, traditional drama, folk art forms, traditional fine arts, traditional craftsmanship, and folk customs, with a wide distribution and extensive influence.

Thanks to the Grand Canal, the river and sea, the status as a commercial port and gateway, and the form of the nine foreign concessions, Tianjin's intangible cultural heritage has developed a cultural character that blends the north and the south and caters to both the refined and the popular. It features mass appeal, uniqueness and interest. Whether it is the old vinegar from Duliu Town, the handcrafted buttons of Laomeihua, the gourd-making skills or the traditional Chinese medicine store Daren Tang, the intangible cultural heritage of Jigu is almost always found in the streets and alleys, mostly integrated into the daily life of the common people, being both popular and of high quality. For the inheritors of intangible cultural heritage, despite the passage of time, they still adhere to using sincerity, genuine skills and real materials to showcase the creativity and uniqueness of the craftsmanship. Take Tianjin Niren Zhang for example, it combines molding and painting, using realistic expression techniques. From material selection to coloring to the proportion of the shape, everything is meticulously considered. The craftsmanship is constantly innovated to achieve a perfect combination of form and spirit, creating many representative works such as "Jiangmen Shen", "Zhong Kui" and "Dream Baby". Intangible cultural heritage comes from life and is rooted in life. The intangible cultural heritage from "the city of eyes", Tianjin, is also full of interest. Just as a carving artist said, Tianjin people are optimistic and positive. The artisans always have the power to "turn flaws into virtues", and are good at finding "yes" in "no", making the artworks full of interest.

At present, new forms of cultural and tourism industries are emerging in Tianjin. The integration of business, culture and tourism, agriculture, culture and tourism, and sports, culture and tourism is continuously deepening. This has led to a variety of trends such as adapting to local conditions, combining dynamic and static elements, cross-border integration, and technological innovation, attracting a large number of tourists. According to statistics from the Tianjin Municipal Bureau of Culture and Tourism, during the three-day Qingming Festival holiday in 2024, the city's cultural and tourism market remained booming, receiving 7.1021 million tourists and generating 6.063 billion yuan in tourism revenue. It is evident that the prospects for cultural and tourism in Tianjin are broad and promising [3].

For a long time, various districts have been continuously exploring historical and cultural resources, leveraging the advantages of intangible cultural heritage within their jurisdictions, and generating a linkage effect with other tourism resources. This has led to the formation of multiple business models such as "intangible cultural heritage + cultural and creative products", "intangible cultural heritage + homestays", "intangible cultural heritage + study tours", "intangible cultural heritage + performances", and "intangible cultural heritage + festivals". They have also enriched the practice methods of intangible cultural heritage tourism from three dimensions: tourism subjects, tourism media, and tourism objects. This has paved an innovative path for the integration and co-prosperity of intangible cultural heritage tourism, cultural consumption, rural revitalization, and urban cultural and artistic

undertakings. It not only enhances tourists' cultural experience but also opens up a new path for the three-dimensional protection of intangible cultural heritage and the dynamic inheritance of the market genes of intangible cultural heritage.

3. The Practice Models of "Intangible Cultural Heritage + Tourism" Integration in Tianjin

Terry Clark, the leading figure of the New Chicago School in the United States, proposed the renowned urban research theoretical paradigm - "The Scene Theory". This theory posits that the driving force for economic growth in post-industrial cities stems from the specific cultural value orientations contained in various cultural and artistic activities and consumption practice scenes. That is, by combining elements such as time, space, facilities, people, and activities into different scenes through specific patterns, the cultural factors, lifestyles, and aesthetic qualities carried by these scenes are utilized to promote urban economic development. This model focuses on the cultural impetus for urban growth and development, providing a theoretical basis for creating urban cultural and tourism consumption spaces and driving the upgrading of the cultural and tourism industry [4].

Currently, in Tianjin, the main practice models of intangible cultural heritage tourism include the museum and exhibition hall model, stage performance model, folk culture tour model, industrial park model, theme cultural festival model, and heritage experience base model. By creating different scenes to cultivate cultural identity, attract human capital, foster creative industries, and drive urban renewal.

3.1 Cultural and Museum Venue Model

Cultural and museum venues, which include museums, exhibition halls, and cultural centers, are social and cultural institutions that collect, preserve, research, and display physical materials related to human beings and their living environment. With the rise of the information and knowledge economy, the increasing recognition of traditional Chinese culture, and the continuous popularity of cultural and museum documentaries, cultural and creative products, and cultural relic emojis, cultural and museum venues have gradually become new landmarks for urban cultural tourism, providing more opportunities for intangible cultural heritage from different regions to reach the public. They mainly showcase local intangible cultural heritage through exhibitions, performances, lectures, workshops, and other forms, and develop intangible cultural heritage as tourism resources. This model not only helps with the dynamic inheritance of intangible cultural heritage and the dissemination of regional culture but also contributes to maintaining the innovative vitality of the tourism market [5].

The Tianjin Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition Hall in Heping District showcases 48 intangible cultural heritage protection projects in the district, including Goubuli Baozi and Tianjin Street Cries. Since its opening, it has continuously explored new forms of public cultural supply and created a platform for experiencing intangible cultural heritage that integrates book reading, art exhibitions, cultural salons, and outdoor activities, improving the quality of tourism services. In addition, cultural and museum venues such as the Tianjin Museum, Digital Art Museum, Folklore Museum, Drama Museum, Art Museum, and Yangliuqing New Year Picture Museum have launched a series of special intangible cultural heritage exhibitions, cultural and creative products, experience projects, and study tours, effectively transforming intangible cultural heritage from cultural resources into tourism products.

The cultural and museum venue model focuses more on the popularization of knowledge and cultural dissemination of intangible cultural heritage handcrafts and presents them to consumers through a series of interactive, immersive, and participatory experience activities. However, it currently faces problems such as high pressure on talent supply, limited venue resources, single activity forms, and low audience participation. Further exploration is needed in aspects such as resource integration and sharing, talent cultivation, innovative display forms, establishment of interactive platforms, and evaluation and monitoring [6].

3.2 Stage Performance Model

The stage performance model is an innovative approach that organically integrates intangible cultural heritage (ICH) into stage shows, script performances, and other art forms. This model mainly involves ICH projects such as dance,

music, drama, and folk art. By combining local culture, it creates unique and historically rich performance products, presenting tourists with a magnificent cultural feast and generating spillover effects for local tourism development. In recent years, many performance theaters have been built in Tianjin, and the ICH tourism resources have been redeveloped through live-action performances and opera-like shows. Many travel agencies have also launched cultural tourism routes with ICH themes that include watching performances, allowing tourists to experience the charm of ICH while enjoying the local customs and traditions, thereby promoting the development of local tourism.

At the end of 2021, the Tianjin Municipal Bureau of Culture and Tourism launched the immersive art project "Teahouse" that combines "folk art + drama". This play is based on stage performance and ingeniously incorporates ICH such as Tianjin Rap, Monologue, and Drum Music, adding a strong local flavor and creating a cultural landmark work with strong Tianjin characteristics. The stage performance format allows the audience to be fully immersed in the plot and performance, and also gives ICH projects a larger audience. In this model, the audience is not only a spectator but can also experience ICH by playing roles. In June 2023, the Culture and Tourism Bureau of Heping District, Tianjin, hosted a performance themed "Echoes of ICH", which mainly featured Tianjin folk art. It broke away from the traditional exhibition hall visit model and allowed citizens and tourists to deeply understand ICH through interaction with the actors. The successful development of the "ICH + stage performance" model through modern innovative interpretation helps enhance the quality and appeal of performance products, and optimize the cultural depth and interaction level of tourists' cultural and tourism experiences [7].

Overall, the stage performance model is characterized by greater intuitiveness, embodying an integration of art, creativity, and technology. However, the most prominent challenge confronting this model lies in the talent gap in scriptwriting, which leads to a scarcity of plays tailored to the new era and a substantial compromise in stage effects. Thus, exploring ways to craft innovative theatrical works that both inherit traditional essence and align with the aesthetic preferences of contemporary audiences constitutes a significant academic and practical proposition.

3.3 Folk Culture Tour Mode

The key to the sustainable development of intangible cultural heritage lies in the active participation of multiple subjects such as communities and the public. The folk culture tour mode refers to the creation of distinctive folk culture tour routes and projects, allowing tourists to experience the local customs, folkways, and historical culture on the spot, making intangible cultural heritage a winning formula for driving the tourism economy. Generally speaking, the folk culture tour mode can be divided into the following three categories:

3.3.1 Historical and cultural block model

The first model is the historical and cultural street model. This model usually integrates various local intangible cultural heritage exhibitions and experiences, and is accompanied by varying degrees of commercialization. Tianjin Ancient Culture Street is a prime example. Tianjin Ancient Culture Street is not only an important commercial street but also a rich repository of intangible cultural heritage, gathering traditional handicrafts such as the Zhang Family Clay Figurines, Zhang's Fried Peanuts, Tianjin School Gourd Engraving, and Imperial Incense Making. The creative cultural products are innovative and heartfelt, providing tourists with a one-stop destination that combines cultural sightseeing, folk experience, and leisure shopping [8].

3.3.2 The model of cultural ecological protection zones

The second model is the cultural ecological protection zone model. This model is based on villages or specific regional units and is a protection and inheritance model for areas with high cultural aggregation or complex cultural styles. This model is mostly found in ancient villages or ethnic settlement areas, integrating natural material space and cultural ecological space, and is a regional overall protection model. Cui Zhuang Village in Binhai New Area, Tianjin was included in the fifth batch of China's traditional villages list in 2019. The village has the only key protected plant cultural relic in China, the ancient winter jujube tree [9]. Tourists can observe and experience the intangible cultural heritage agricultural techniques such as bark girdling, grafting, and

intercropping that have been passed down along with the ancient winter jujube tree during the daily agricultural activities of local villagers, allowing them to experience the joy of farming and the charm of intangible cultural heritage.

3.3.3 The festival event model

The third model is the festival event model. Festival events serve as interpretive sites of history and life, carrying collective cultural memories with characteristics of periodicity and relative stability. During festival celebrations, rural cultural customs can be displayed in a more concentrated and vivid manner, constructing interactive scenarios for tourists to understand rural areas. For example, the Gegu Baolian Festival in Gegu Town, Jinnan District, Tianjin, emerged in the late Ming Dynasty and is held on the 16th day of the first lunar month annually. As a cultural product shaped by the long-term labor and life of local residents, it attracts a large number of tourists from across the country to Tianjin during each performance period, with displays presented in the unique forms of seated music ensembles and folk performance troupes. Due to specific historical contexts, this model has certain limitations in terms of its holding time.

In summary, the three models of folk cultural tourism integrate intangible cultural elements—including rituals, craftsmanship, customs, performances, and fine arts—to varying degrees, serving as concentrated manifestations of the incubation and inheritance of diverse folk cultures. Notably, during their development, issues such as excessive commercialization and homogenization have emerged, with the authenticity, integrity, and artistic expression of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) being neglected [10]. Therefore, how to formulate a comprehensive overall plan that balances the protection of cultural relics and ancient architecture, ecological environmental conservation, village and town construction, and farmland water conservancy development has become a critical issue to be addressed in the advancement of folk cultural tourism models.

3.4 Industrial Park Model

The industrial park model mainly takes the revitalization of traditional intangible cultural heritage (ICH) craftsmanship as an opportunity. It utilizes original ecological venues, facilities, and equipment resources to create ICH production technology parks. It closely integrates industry, tourism, and ICH protection, and combines entertainment, travel, shopping, and transportation forms. The aim is to enhance the original ecological and modern nature of ICH production techniques. This model can centrally display, experience, and extend the ICH industrial chain, promoting its inheritance and innovation [11]. At the same time, it fully leverages the advantages of ICH resources and effectively converts them into cultural and tourism products through production, circulation, and sales means, thereby boosting the development of related industries. Currently, this model typically includes ICH workshops, training centers, and experience zones. Tourists have the opportunity to participate in the production process of ICH products, understand production techniques on-site, experience the living space of ICH, and promote the dissemination of ICH craftsmanship and culture as well as the development of ICH industrial bases.

Tianjin has achieved some successful cases in the construction of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) industrial parks. For instance, the handcraft of silk flowers in Caozi is a municipal-level ICH in Tianjin. In Wuqing District of Tianjin, there is a diversified and integrated silk flower industrial cultural park. The entire park is divided into six sections, with exhibition and sales going on simultaneously, allowing visitors to have a comprehensive perception and experience of silk flower products. In the ICH experience area, visitors can learn the techniques of making, assembling, pasting and arranging silk flowers under the guidance of professionals, and appreciate the exquisite craftsmanship and charm of ICH in an entertaining way. Moreover, the industrial park model can benefit enterprises, the government and tourists, build the brand of ICH cultural industrial parks, make ICH brands come alive and thrive, and encourage more local people to stay and carry on the living inheritance of the skills, thereby promoting the vigorous development of the industrial chain.

The Yangliuqing ICH Cultural Industrial Park in Tianjin has been deeply involved in the development of the tourism market for a long time and has evolved into a new tourist attraction that combines "intellectual" and "leisure" elements. Yangliuqing is rich in ICH resources, such as Yangliuqing New Year woodblock prints, paper-cutting and kites. These ICH projects, as the core resources of the

industrial park, fully embody the idea of "traditional elements + contemporary expression", attracting a large number of tourists and investors. The park has exhibition halls, workshops, maker spaces, cultural streets and other facilities, providing places for ICH traditional handicraftsmen to display and produce. The industrial park takes ICH traditional handicrafts as its core and covers design, production and sales [12]. These distinctive regional ICH tourism and cultural products have greatly stimulated the purchasing desire of tourists.

The ingenious combination of intangible cultural heritage and industrial production has injected new vitality into these traditional intangible cultural skills. On the one hand, this model is conducive to the adjustment of the local cultural industry structure, thereby promoting the coordinated development of the cultural industry in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and economic growth. On the other hand, through productive protection, it promotes the integration of intangible cultural heritage into people's lives. However, at present, this model urgently needs strong financial support and continuous efforts in aspects such as the exploration of intangible cultural heritage connotations, market connection, industrialization degree, and talent innovation, focusing on brand building, cross-border cooperation, industrial integration, and talent attraction.

3.5 Theme Cultural Festival Model

To realize the vision of "ICH being visible in people, objects, and daily life", local authorities nationwide have organized various themed cultural festivals—either regularly or on special occasions—tailored to local characteristics. These festivals centrally showcase and communicate the forms, techniques, and conceptual connotations of ICH through on-site publicity, exhibitions, performances, and sales, thereby activating consumer vitality by providing high-quality public cultural services.

In early 2024, Tianjin hosted the "Jinwei Shiguang: Tianjin First Breakfast Cultural Tourism Festival" at Shuishang Park in Nankai District, marking China's first culinary cultural tourism event themed on "breakfast". The festival not only featured the "Northwest Corner Breakfast Troupe" but also invited Tianjin ICH time-honored brands and renowned breakfast enterprises, including Nanlou Pancake, Zhenshucheng Guobacai, Xinghe Yongwang Noodles, Huibin Bone Soup Wontons, and Xiuzhe Shuligao [13]. It also integrated interactive elements such as breakfast passport check-in, cultural and creative wish walls, and "foodie memory competitions", enabling tourists to enjoy a one-stop ICH experience encompassing dining, leisure, entertainment, and exploration.

As a city "shaped by the Grand Canal", Tianjin has fostered a diverse and open regional cultural identity, boasting numerous unique ICH heritage items rooted in the Grand Canal cultural context. Local cultural and tourism authorities have organized a series of themed cultural festivals centered on these ICH resources: for example, the Jizhou Liyuanqing Tourism Cultural Festival, which showcases ICH techniques such as Liu's Sugar Painting, Official-Style Straw Fan Weaving, and Shadow Puppet Carving; and the Wuqing Grand Canal Cultural Festival, which gathers ICH projects including Tianjin Niren Zhang Clay Figurines, Guifaxiang Fried Dough Twist Making Technique, and Beichen Folk Painting.

The themed cultural festival model, an outcome of the integration between commerce and intangible cultural heritage (ICH), involves the creation of high-quality environmental experiences within specific public cultural spaces, fulfilling multifaceted functions including leisure and entertainment, cultural experience, and exhibition and appreciation. However, this model exhibits certain limitations in terms of sustainable development, business model design, and public participation. Moving forward, local authorities should establish a leading mechanism, enhance publicity efforts, mobilize the participation of multiple social stakeholders, innovate digital operation models, and select themes with high public recognition on the basis of fully leveraging local advantages.

3.6 Transmission and Experience Base Model

Transmission and experience refer to the inheritance and research-based learning of intangible cultural heritage (ICH). The integration of ICH and transmission and experience is a brand-new form of cultural tourism following sightseeing and leisure tourism. This model enables tourists to systematically and intuitively understand and recognize ICH in a real ICH environment, professional activity venues, and abundant ICH

resources, and to experience the profoundness and vastness of traditional culture during the process.

By the end of 2023, Tianjin had determined 56 municipal-level ICH transmission and experience bases, covering all 16 districts and relevant municipal-level units, such as the Tianjin Mazu Culture Transmission and Experience Center, the Gourd Making Skills Transmission and Experience Base, the Kite Making Skills (Tianjin Wei Kite) Transmission and Experience Base, and the Cloisonné Traditional Handicraft Transmission and Experience Base. The Yinyin Yuan Ancient Books Binding Museum and the Four Great Inventions ICH Experience Center in Hebei District, Tianjin, is an experience base and spiritual space that showcases the vitality of traditional culture and the charm of cultural creativity. Here, people can immerse themselves in a full set of traditional Chinese printing techniques, including papermaking, printing, and ancient book binding, visit the Four Great Inventions exhibition, and experience projects such as woodblock printing, rubbing, and hand painting, bringing traditional culture into the leisure cultural life of the public [14].

The integration of ICH and transmission and experience can open up channels for quality education and has strong participatory and educational significance. These outstanding folk traditional skills are important carriers for moral, physical, and aesthetic education, and are also educational resources for the transmission of local characteristic culture and the cultivation of cultural confidence. They can imperceptibly improve the aesthetic level of student groups, stimulate their innovation and creativity, deepen their understanding and reflection on modern society, and enhance their sense of identity and pride in traditional culture. Currently, ICH transmission and experience bases still need further exploration in terms of theme selection, environmental design optimization, and study tour course design.

In summary, driven by these six "ICH + Tourism" practice models, the construction of ICH cultural tourism projects in Tianjin is progressing vigorously. However, in the process of leveraging ICH resources for tourism development, several common issues persist: noticeable homogenization, insufficient excavation of ICH connotations, weak experiential interactivity, lack of cultural creativity, inadequate depth of participation from the public and ICH inheritors, unsound guarantee mechanisms, a shortage of innovative talents, and ineffective outcomes of "shaping tourism with culture" [15].

The integration of ICH and tourism must fully adhere to fundamental principles: protecting ICH resources serves as the premise, excavating cultural connotations is the key, innovation-driven transformation acts as the driving force, and in-depth integrated development constitutes the essence. To advance high-quality development of ICH cultural tourism, it is critical to identify the convergence points between ICH resources and tourism integration, embed ICH protection into people's daily lives (encompassing clothing, food, housing, and transportation), and align it with urban construction, beautiful rural development, and industrial construction.

4. Integrated Development Paths of "ICH + Tourism" in Tianjin

In early 2024，China government had proposed during the inspection of Tianjin that "nurturing people with culture, benefiting people with culture, nourishing the city with culture, and invigorating industries with culture—so as to showcase the city's cultural characteristics and spiritual temperament—is the purpose of inheriting and developing urban culture and fostering urban civilization" [14]. This has expanded new ideas for Tianjin, a famous historical and cultural city, to promote the in-depth integration of ICH and tourism, and also clarified the direction for the improvement and optimization of the six aforementioned "ICH + Tourism" practice models [16].

4.1 Uphold the Principle of "Nurturing People with Culture" to Build Tianjin's Distinctive ICH

Cultural and creative (CC) development should adhere to "nurturing people with culture", taking "nurturing people with culture" and "shaping tourism with culture" as the ultimate goals of Tianjin's ICH cultural tourism, so as to forge Tianjin's unique cultural temperament and spiritual connotation. ICH-related CC products can exist either as tangible entities or intangible service forms, and can empower various ICH tourism practice models. The development of CC products embodies the integration and empowerment mechanism of "ICH culture +":

on one hand, it promotes the transformation of ICH cultural resources into cultural products; on the other hand, it injects more cultural value into traditional products, thereby satisfying people's aspiration for a better life. In the information era, the development of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) cultural and creative (CC) products should adhere to the following five principles:

4.1.1 Visual appeal as the initial attraction driver

In an era of attention scarcity, visual appeal has emerged as an increasingly critical factor. Essentially, the underlying logic of public focus on visual appeal lies in the exploration of the design thinking and aesthetic characteristics embedded in products. In other words, visual appeal represents visualized design capability and serves as the starting point for capturing audience attention.

4.1.2 Content capability as the core end goal

Content capability refers to the values, philosophical perspectives, views on nature, and aesthetic concepts conveyed by product symbols. It enables the construction of an "ideal self" image for consumers, thereby establishing emotional connections with them and securing sustained attention.

4.1.3 Stimulating the impetus for social sharing

By providing tourists with valuable information and content, and leveraging both interest-driven incentives (e.g., gifts, free coupons) and emotion-driven motivations (e.g., emotional resonance, emotional value), active sharing behaviors can be encouraged. Through user-to-user connections, this facilitates broader communication resonance.

4.1.4 Establishing an effective interactive co-creation mechanism

Whether relying on digital platforms or diverse scenarios, guiding consumers to participate in value co-creation enhances the personalization and differentiation of ICH CC products or services, gradually transforming consumers into "prosumer" roles (combining producer and consumer identities). The DIY "Dunhuang Poem Scarf" serves as a typical example.

4.1.5 Building distinctive ICH CC IPs

Contemporary social production factors have shifted from material resources (e.g., land, minerals) to non-material resources (e.g., symbolic elements such as information, patents, and copyrights). Social wealth is increasingly embodied in symbolic value and data capital, and CC IPs—including trademarks, patents, and copyrights—have become one of the core production factors for economic and social development. Successfully developing ICH CC IPs has thus become a key grasp and breakthrough point for localities seeking the transformative development of cultural tourism.

Thus, whether leveraging collection resources and featured exhibitions of cultural and museum institutions, ICH-themed scenic spots, or ICH brand events, the development of ICH cultural and creative (CC) products should involve in-depth excavation of regionally representative ICH resources. It is essential to engage more ICH inheritors and consumers in CC design processes, focus on the demands of distinct consumer groups, and provide all-round support for the CC industry in terms of talent, funding, design, packaging, technology, and venues [17]. Additionally, efforts should be made to promote tripartite collaboration between universities, enterprises, and local authorities, create high-quality cultural tourism products, enhance the design of ICH IP images with high aesthetic value and distinct identities, narrate local ICH stories effectively, and satisfy the sharing and social interaction needs of young consumer groups through creative practices.

4.2 Uphold the Principle of "Benefiting the People through Culture" to Launch Brand ICH Cultural Activities

Upholding the principle of "benefiting the people through culture" and advancing the high-quality development of ICH cultural tourism can be achieved by improving the public cultural service system, with specific manifestations in the following three aspects:

First, strengthen the construction of public cultural facilities such as museums, cultural centers, and memorial halls. Focus on the excavation, inheritance, collation, and protection of regional ICH projects; utilize ICH elements embedded in museum collections; explore the modern value of traditional handicraft CC products; accurately grasp the ideological connotations and cultural meanings within ICH; and transform ICH stories into accessible folk narratives that tourists can "understand and perceive clearly", thereby enriching their cultural experiences. Additionally, through approaches such as digital ICH exhibitions, online courses, and ICH transmission bases, continuously enrich and optimize exhibition content, integrating museum-based knowledge popularization, educational publicity, cultural immersion,

interactive entertainment, and community activities. This integration aims to provide tourists with high-quality cross-regional and cross-cultural digital ICH products and cultural activity services [18].

Second, empower rural tourism through ICH folk cultural activities. ICH is closely intertwined with rural societies and serves as a critical resource for rural tourism development. It is necessary to leverage characteristic cultural spaces (e.g., ICH protection zones) to construct distinctive cultural tourism areas, gather diverse local characteristic ICH brand projects, and capitalize on the advantages of unique traditional festival culture resources and characteristic ICH food culture resources. This will facilitate the agglomeration effect of multi-industry integration. Moreover, centering on the six core elements of tourism—"accommodation, catering, transportation, sightseeing, shopping, and entertainment"—brand folk cultural experience activities should be developed to forge distinctive local ICH cultural tourism features.

Third， Tianjin is renowned for its culinary culture. As of now, there are 150 rural intangible cultural heritage (ICH) food resources in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei (BTH) region, with Tianjin accounting for the highest proportion of national and municipal-level ICH food resources. These resources cover characteristic foods such as snacks from the Ming and Qing imperial courts, folk snacks, traditional pastries, meat products, and alcoholic beverages, integrating both northern and southern flavors. They are mainly categorized under traditional craftsmanship and represent the ICH project category with the greatest potential for industrial development.

In the future, a series of activities can be implemented through tangible carriers such as ICH food workshops, ICH food industrial parks, and ICH food markets. This will enable two-way empowerment between ICH participation in industrial revitalization and rural tourism, injecting new vitality into rural revitalization while providing villagers and tourists with a more colorful spiritual and cultural life. Additionally, Tianjin continues to develop distinctive brand cultural activities including Jixian folk ecological tourism, crosstalk festivals, and Mazu Cultural Tourism Festivals, highlighting typical local cultural symbols. Through approaches such as influencer field visits, live-streaming promotions, and preferential campaigns, ICH cultural tourism products can generate public discourse, attract traffic and followers, and actively promote the integrated development of cultural, social, and economic benefits [19].

4.3 Uphold the Principle of "Cultivating the City with Culture" and Leverage Historical and Cultural Resources to Shape Tianjin's New Modern Landscape

Chinese-style modernization is inseparable from the inheritance and promotion of fine traditional culture, and the vigorous development of the tourism industry also relies on the infiltration and nourishment of traditional culture. The principle of "Cultivating the City with Culture" has pointed out the direction for the development of ICH cultural tourism.

First, based on Tianjin's unique urban features and the culture of the Grand Canal, we should comprehensively protect, display and interpret the rich intangible cultural heritage along the Grand Canal. We should promote the systematic protection of cultural heritage such as ancient buildings, ancient towns, historical streets, traditional villages and cultural landscapes, and adhere to development in protection and protection in development, nourishing the city's cultural genes with traditional culture. Second, we should make good use of historical and cultural resources in the process of inheritance and innovation, such as the Shi Family Courtyard and Yangliuqing Folk Culture Museum. We should focus on improving the quality of key streets such as the Ancient Culture Street, actively create more diversified application scenarios for intangible cultural heritage, promote the activation and utilization of intangible cultural heritage resources, and achieve the organic combination of the protection of traditional patterns and the renewal of modern urban functions. Third, we should increase support for the inheritance, innovation and development of time-honored brands. Relying on the trade port's foreign trade dividends and the development of modern and contemporary national industry and commerce, Tianjin has become a major economic and trade center in the north, with many time-honored brands such as Ni Ren Zhang Clay Figurines, Tianli Duliu Old Vinegar and Gui Faxiang Eighteen Street Twisted Dough. The total number of brands ranks third in the country [20].

These time-honored brands carry the city's memory and humanistic heritage, and play a vital role in enriching people's lives, advocating honest business practices, and inheriting and developing regional culture. They are indispensable elements of Tianjin's cultural heritage.

Therefore, it is necessary to integrate cultural and tourism resources to create online or offline Chinese time-honored brand markets and non-heritage gathering places, achieving the clustered development of time-honored brands. To advance this agenda, three strategic initiatives are proposed:

4.3.1 Integrate cultural and tourism resources to foster clustered development of time-honored brands

This involves establishing both online and offline platforms—such as "Chinese Time-honored Brand Market Malls" and "ICH Agglomeration Hubs"—to enable collaborative growth of heritage brands. Concurrently, offline ICH agglomeration zones should be embedded into Tianjin's traditional commercial clusters, including Nanshi Food Street (Heping District), Ancient Culture Street (Old Town), and Heping Road Commercial Street. This spatial integration creates synergies between heritage brands and urban commercial ecosystems, unlocking new potentials for Tianjin's cultural tourism sector.

4.3.2 Strengthen the "Jin" cultural identity to enhance urban brand influence

By centering narratives on Tianjin's unique cultural heritage, the city can leverage "Jin-style culture" as a core driver for building a distinctive urban cultural brand and advancing culture-tourism integration. This requires aligning heritage promotion with city marketing strategies to amplify the cultural resonance of Tianjin's tourism offerings.

4.3.3 Innovate experiential and digital approaches to activate heritage value

Through immersive thematic design, digital technologies (e.g., AR/VR), and spatial renovation, purpose-built facilities—such as "Time-honored Brand Museums" or "Characteristic Tourism Bases"—can be developed to reconstruct historical scenes of Tianjin heritage brands. These venues should showcase brand histories, artisanal craftsmanship, signature products, and innovative achievements, while incorporating functional zones like ICH product exhibition-sales areas and DIY experience zones [21]. Such design transforms the "cultural tour" of time-honored brands into a one-stop experiential shopping journey, realizing a dual gain of cultural preservation and commercial viability.

4.3.4 Heritage brand stores should deepen cultural connotation excavation and product innovation.

By adopting cross-border collaborations and co-branding strategies, they can develop creative cultural products, launch popular "trendy heritage items," and build the "Tianjin Souvenir" brand. This approach promotes the integrated development of commerce, cultural tourism, and leisure industries, fostering a sustainable ecosystem where heritage value and market demand mutually reinforce each other [22].

4.4 Uphold the Principle of "Cultivating Industries through Culture" and Empower High-Quality Development of ICH Cultural Tourism with Technology

The principle of "Cultivating Industries through Culture" underscores that the advancement of the cultural and tourism sector relies on technological innovation to enhance its vitality. Emerging productive forces such as artificial intelligence (AI) and digitalization have been widely applied in content production innovation, consumption experience upgrading, and cultural industry transformation, thereby opening up new dimensions for the inheritance and development of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and the quality improvement of cultural tourism. The Action Plan for the Integrated Development of Virtual Reality and Industry Applications (2022–2026) issued by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism explicitly proposes the integration of cultural tourism with virtual reality (VR) technologies. With the advent of the interactive era, metaverse technologies can provide tourists with immersive experiences characterized by interactivity, presence, and imaginative engagement, while also injecting new impetus into the integrated development of ICH and tourism [23]. Specifically, the technical pathways can be categorized into the following four types:

4.4.1 Virtual simulation technology

Which refers to a technological approach that constructs immersive simulation environments through the integration of virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), mixed reality (MR), and related technologies, underpinned by digital twin and digital-native modeling techniques.

Visitors can engage with these environments via head-mounted displays, holographic projection systems, and other interactive devices, enabling first-person, experiential immersion [21]. The high degree of realism achieved through such simulations not only facilitates the preservation and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) but also significantly expands the supply of innovative offerings in ICH-based tourism. A representative case is the exhibition design at the China Grand Canal Museum in Yangzhou, where 5G-enabled VR and advanced projection technologies have been extensively deployed to create the "5G Grand Canal" immersive experience zone [22]. Surrounding panoramic screens vividly present the local customs, urban landscapes, and rich ICH of 17 canal cities, offering visitors a multisensory encounter with historical and cultural narratives [24].

4.4.2 Holographic projection technology

In the context of ICH cultural tourism, this technology is primarily applied in outdoor light-and-shadow spectacles and indoor multimedia installations. For example, the "White Sand with Egrets, Meeting under the Moonlight" water screen show in Chengyang District, Qingdao, integrates dynamic water projections, festival-related ICH elements, and contemporary lifestyle themes through synchronized lighting and visual effects. This creates an ethereal, dreamlike cultural landscape that enhances visitor engagement while stimulating nighttime economic activity and reinforcing the city cultural branding.

4.4.3 Virtual digital humans

Virtual digital humans, which are digitalized human figures, are very close to real people in appearance, voice and behavior. In recent years, virtual digital humans have frequently appeared in various cultural and tourism scenarios. For instance, "Tianhao", a virtual digital human based on the "Dunhuang Flying Apsaras", is a good example. These virtual digital humans have become virtual city representatives, providing a new perspective for the creative transformation and innovative development of traditional culture. Therefore, virtual digital humans have great potential in the development of intangible cultural heritage itself and its integration with tourism.

In conclusion, no matter which technological means are used, the goal is to build a scene where "people, emotions and scenes" are deeply integrated. In the traditional sense, a scene is more about the concept of space. However, in the digital age, a scene refers to the integration of specific time, specific characters and specific emotions in a specific space, providing tourists with a strong immersive experience through story construction. To achieve the mutual pursuit of "intangible cultural heritage + tourism", this immersive experience can be widely applied to various models of the integrated development of intangible cultural heritage and tourism, such as immersive digital exhibitions of intangible cultural heritage, immersive theme entertainment centers of intangible cultural heritage, immersive theme parks of intangible cultural heritage, immersive intangible cultural heritage hotels, and immersive intangible cultural heritage theaters, etc., to meet the needs of tourists through scene construction [25].

Moreover, the integration of digital technology and new media, such as Douyin and short videos, has led to a shift in cultural content production from small-scale professional authors to a large-scale of amateur authors. That is to say, today anyone can participate in cultural expression, engage in artistic creation, and promote intangible cultural heritage tourism resources. Currently, intangible cultural heritage inheritors are gradually becoming internet celebrities. High-quality content or a remarkable skill is enough to attract traffic and convert it into purchasing power, thus bringing intangible cultural heritage back into people's daily lives. In the future, intangible cultural heritage inheritors can cooperate more with influential new media internet celebrities. This not only helps to stimulate the innovation enthusiasm of intangible cultural heritage inheritors but also promotes intangible cultural heritage projects and drives the integrated development of culture and tourism.

5. Discussion

Overall, in the practice of the integrated development of "intangible cultural heritage and tourism", it is worth considering how to break through the homogenization phenomenon of cultural and tourism projects or products and establish a competitive edge. The fundamental solution to this problem lies in continuously deepening the supply-side structural reform of cultural and tourism, focusing on four dimensions: cultural resources, transformation of cultural elements, market research, and talent cultivation, to expand the supply of high-quality

cultural and tourism products.

To this end, first, it is necessary to constantly explore, study, and interpret the inherent intangible cultural heritage resources, and at the same time be good at developing and introducing new cultural genes and cultural elements, forming sustainable IP symbols. For instance, the IP symbol of Wuzhen has transformed from "Jiangnan Water Town" to later "Theater Festival" and "World Internet Conference", etc. The core is to create a "one place, one product" cultural and tourism brand from the aspects of resource products, business models, and spiritual forms, build competitive barriers, and achieve the integrated development of tourism and intangible cultural heritage.

Second, it is essential to accelerate the development of a comprehensive "intangible cultural heritage + tourism" resource database. This involves identifying and extracting the most representative regional ICH elements and embedding them with narrative depth to form the storytelling core of cultural and creative products. Visual and auditory components—such as patterns, graphics, colors, sounds, and textual motifs—can be systematically extracted, either directly or through adaptive reinterpretation, from ICH resources. These elements should then be transformed into accessible sensory languages that convey the material culture, behavioral practices, and spiritual values embedded within intangible heritage. By creatively reinterpreting historical and contemporary narratives, distinctive, region-specific cultural products can be developed to enhance cultural authenticity and market differentiation.

Third, rigorous market research must be conducted to understand evolving consumer trends. This includes analyzing demographic variables such as age distribution, educational background, and cultural preferences, as well as assessing specific product expectations. Based on these insights, a robust product evaluation and monitoring mechanism should be established to support data-driven decision-making. Cultural and tourism offerings should be scientifically positioned to deliver customized and personalized experiences that foster deeper emotional connections with consumers. In the context of rural cultural tourism, platforms for dialogue and interaction should be created to facilitate communication among local ICH practitioners, visitors, and other stakeholders. Such participatory mechanisms help preserve cultural integrity and mitigate risks associated with over-commercialization and homogenization.

Fourth, there must be a strategic expansion of talent supply in the cultural and creative sectors. On one hand, local governments should strengthen talent acquisition by organizing initiatives such as cultural innovation workshops, design competitions, and thematic exhibitions to identify and nurture emerging creators. On the other hand, higher education institutions should play a pivotal role in cultivating interdisciplinary professionals equipped with expertise in cultural industry management, content creation, and digital technology application. Particular emphasis should be placed on training talents capable of integrating creative design with digital tools, as this capability is critical for advancing the digital transformation and sustainable development of the cultural and tourism sector.

Acknowledgement

This work is funded by the "Pre-research Project of Major Projects in 2025 of Tianjin University of Finance and Economics Pearl River College, “Research on the Dynamic Inheritance and Integrated Development Path of Tianjin Intangible Cultural Heritage”, Project Approval Number: ZJZD25-01".

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