

The Role of Community Education in China in the Transmission of Traditional Culture: A Systematic Literature Review

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i9/22601>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i9/22601

Published Date: 18 September 2024

Abstract

As globalization progresses, the preservation and transmission of traditional cultures become critically important. Community education plays a significant role in cultural heritage, particularly in China, a multi-ethnic nation emphasizing the importance of inheriting and promoting ethnic cultures within the framework of constructing a modern civilization for the Chinese nation. This study aims to systematically review and analyze the existing literature on the application and effectiveness of community education in the transmission of traditional Chinese culture. By synthesizing both domestic and international research, it identifies key factors influencing the effectiveness of cultural transmission through community education and optimizes strategies for future implementations. The author reviewed articles published between 2004 and 2024, using databases from CNKI, and relied on peer-reviewed and online accessible journals for this paper. Despite challenges like resource and policy limitations, community education remains an effective mechanism for preserving and transmitting culture. The recommendations proposed in this study aim to enhance the implementation of community education, support the ongoing preservation and transmission of culture, and inspire practitioners and researchers in the same field.

Keywords: Community Education, Cultural Inheritance, Traditional Culture, Systematic Literature Review.

Introduction

Culture is the spiritual foundation on which a people's survival depends, and the spiritual culture of a people can be perceived through its external manifestations. A nation is a stable community of people formed in history with a common language, a common territory, a common economic life, and common psychological qualities manifested in a common culture. China has been a united multi-ethnic country since ancient times, and in the course of long-term social production, the fifty-six ethnic groups have jointly created a rich and colourful social culture, forming a pluralistic and integrated Chinese nation of equality,

solidarity, mutual assistance and harmony. With the accelerated process of globalisation and modernisation, the diversity of China's minority cultures has been subjected to unprecedented impacts, and the inheritance and development of ethnic cultures are facing difficulties. Some scholars have called for community education to help all members of the community to improve their capacity for self-development and quality of life in an all-round way, to realise the economic and social development of ethnic areas and the protection of traditional culture and the coordination of the two, and to promote the harmonious development of ethnic areas. Through community education, the transmission of ethnic culture can be strengthened so that it will not be submerged in mainstream culture in the development of modern society.

Community education began in China in the 1980s. In developing countries, community education is generally regarded as popular education; In Japan, it is emphasised that community education is a kind of social education, which is the open process and result of school education; In the United States of America, it is more likely to be regarded as non-formal community education service; In other countries or regions, it is regarded as a combination of school education and other social undertakings. According to Gu (2003), community education is an activity in which the relevant institutions in the community organise and coordinate resources inside and outside the community according to the needs of the various members of the community and the needs of community development, and flexibly and diversely impart educational content in order to achieve certain kinds of goals, and it is a social education alongside school education, Family education is a social education alongside school education and family education. Li (1999), believed that community education is a kind of education with community attributes, and its goal includes three aspects: one is to meet the community's demand for new knowledge and skills; the second is to cultivate and improve the comprehensive quality of the community's people; and the third is to improve the quality of life of the community's people, and then promote the harmonious development of the community.

Community education has become one of the ideal ways to build a lifelong education system, and its goal is to improve the comprehensive quality and quality of life of community members and to achieve harmonious community development (Zhou, 2012). As the cultural inheritance model of family education is facing the impact of reality, and school education appears to be incompetent in minority culture inheritance. Community education, as an important part of cultural education inheritance, plays a role that cannot be replaced by school education and family education. Especially in China's ethnic minority areas, due to the diversity of the level of social development, the plurality of cultural forms and the complexity of the social environment, it is decided that the practical value of community education must be paid attention to. Ethnic community education has the unique characteristic of ethnic culture, thus making up for the shortcomings of the original mode of transmission and providing a feasible way for the development of ethnic traditional culture.

In recent years, community education has gradually been regarded as an important way to cultivate citizens' cultural literacy and pass on traditional culture, but related studies are still fragmented and lack a systematic exploration of the specific roles and mechanisms of community education in the transmission of traditional Chinese culture. Therefore, this study

aims to systematically review the existing literature and deeply explore the role of community education in the transmission of traditional Chinese culture and its influence mechanism, so as to provide theoretical support for further research and practice.

Due to the lack of existing literature, this study provides a systematic literature review of the role of community education in the cultural transmission of ethnic minorities in China. While traditional literature reviews are useful, they are largely subjective, rely heavily on the knowledge and experience of the authors, and provide a limited rather than exhaustive introduction to the subject matter, leading to the risk of bias or systematic error inherent in the review. A systematic review aims to provide a comprehensive and unbiased synthesis of many relevant studies in a single document. The difference is that it attempts to reveal all the evidence relevant to the question and focuses on reporting data rather than conceptual or theoretical studies. The aim of this systematic review of research is primarily to optimise community education to play a better role in the future preservation and transmission of traditional culture.

To examine what exists in the literature, the following research questions are addressed:

1. What is the current status of community education in the cultural inheritance of ethnic minorities in China?
2. What factors affect the effectiveness of community education in minority cultural heritage?
3. How to improve the strategy of community education in order to protect and pass on minority cultural heritage more effectively ?

Methodology

This systematic literature review utilises the PRISMA guidelines and flowcharts. The PRISMA guidelines include a list of 27 items and a four-stage flowchart outlining the items necessary for transparency when conducting a literature review.

Following an explicit and systematic search strategy, with inclusion and exclusion criteria, a systematic review of the literature will be carried out. For this, the researchers have followed the recommendations of the PRISMA Statement (Page et al., 2021)

Search Strategy

The database selected was CNKI, the reason for choosing this database was because it comprehensively covers the field of this study, the search string was used in databases in the field of education in the fields of title, abstract and keywords. Literature search was carried out in May 2024 and initially 331 records were identified.

The papers included in the systematic literature review described the framework, concepts and applications of minority cultural heritage and cultural heritage in community education, the systematic literature review began with an assessment of two databases relevant to the research area, and an initial search of keywords in the 'All Text' field of the advanced search for each database. 'community education' 'And' 'ethnic minority cultural heritage'.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were established to ensure that the selected studies were relevant and met the research objectives review (Table 1). These criteria were applied independently by two reviewers to ensure objectivity and to minimise bias in the selection of studies (Montenegro-Rueda et al., 2023).

Table 1

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Items	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Publication period	Between 2004—present	Published before 2004
Type of document	Scientific article published in peer-reviewed journal Theoretical and empirical research	Not an article published in a peer-reviewed journal
Type of study	Theoretical and empirical research	Other research (review, opinions, letters to the editor...)
Language	English or Chinese	Neither in English nor in Chinese
Research topic	With community education and cultural heritage	Not and including community education and cultural heritage

To ensure an unbiased assessment, a masked review of the checklist was conducted by two independent researchers, unrelated to the study. This measure was implemented to avoid any assessment bias on the part of the study authors themselves. The selected studies had to meet at least four of the checklist criteria. The checklist used covered the following assessment criteria:

- Is the purpose of the research clearly specified?
- Does it clarify the role of community education in the inheritance of traditional culture?
- Are the data extraction instruments appropriate?
- Are the results obtained useful to the research community?
- Are the authors' conclusions supported by the data analysed?
- Are recommendations made for future research?

Selection of Studies

In this database analysis, there were a total of 331 records, removing duplicates of 113, and a total of 146 studies were excluded because they did not meet the inclusion criteria (N=72). Subsequently, this study used content analysis to assess the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the remaining 72 studies, eliminating 53 studies, and ultimately 16 studies met the inclusion criteria for inclusion in the review.

Figure 1 shows the flow chart of the record selection process based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines.

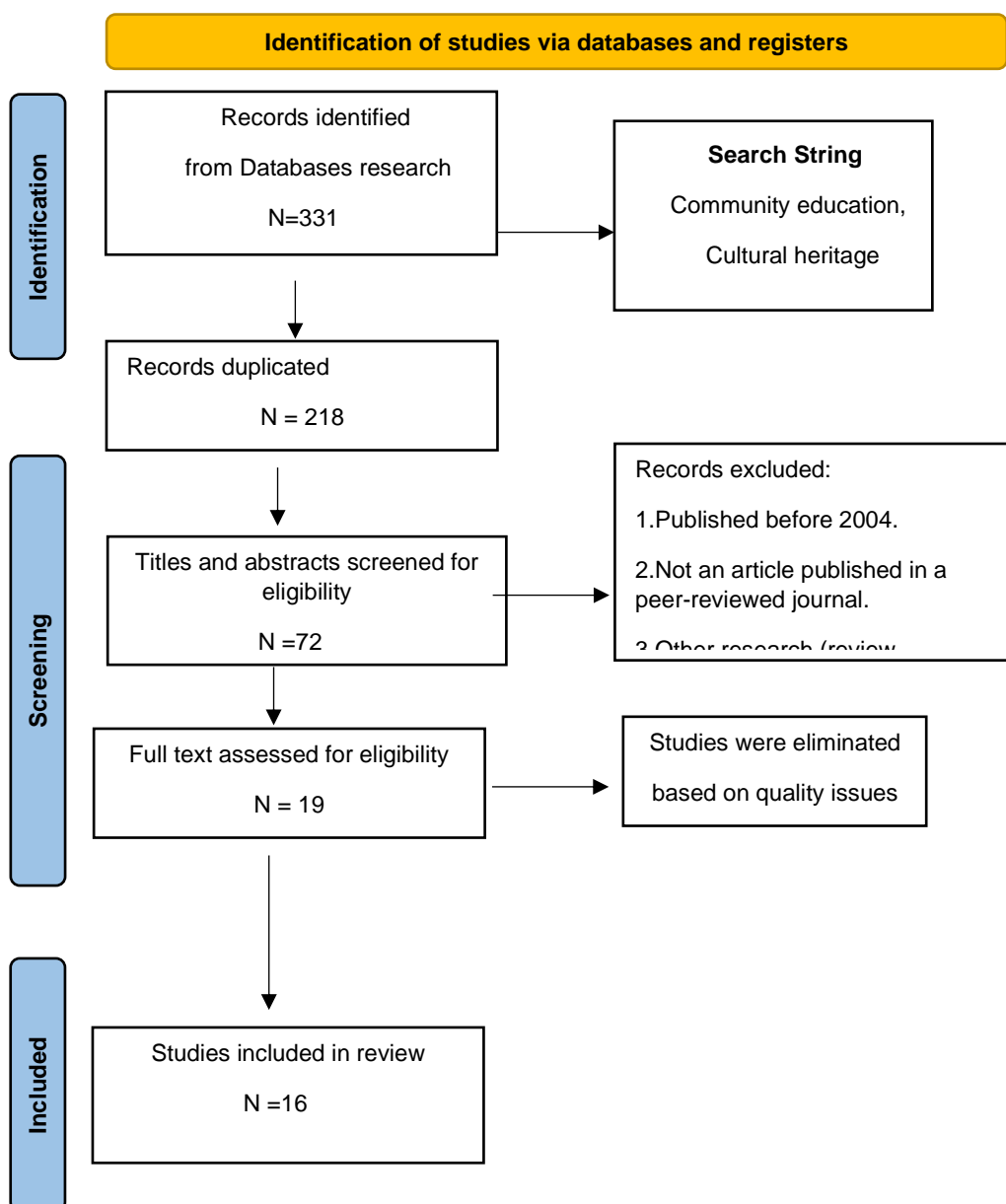


Figure 1: Flow chart of the study selection process

Literature Review on Community Education in Cultural Transmission

During the literature review, two distinct themes emerged. This study used content analysis to code and analyze 16 documents. Based on the research questions and the requirements of a systematic literature review, the literature coding is divided into two categories: (1) The situation of inheritance of traditional culture of ethnic minorities in China, including the necessity, function, current status and dilemma of inheritance. (2) Community education's participation in the cultural inheritance of ethnic minorities, including advantages, significance, internal logic and strategies.

Literature Review on Inheritance of Traditional Culture

The necessity of cultural inheritance

Culture is a symbol of human consensus, and it is also the basis and intrinsic motivation for human beings to form a stable community. Excellent traditional culture itself has a certain degree of national and regional characteristics. It is a concentrated reflection of the value orientation, lifestyle, life characteristics and other contents of a nation or a region (Song, 2017). The inheritance of excellent traditional culture is the reproduction of culture, the way for the entire nation to continuously develop itself, the extensive accumulation of cultural awareness of national members, and the inheritance of the genes of the national community from generation to generation (Kymlicka, 2001). The consciousness of the Chinese nation's community is a concentric circle. The outer circle represents the Chinese nation's community and the inner circle represents the ethnic minority community. Inheriting excellent traditional culture helps to form national and cultural identities.

The Function of Cultural Inheritance

On the one hand, it has the function of popularizing national cultural knowledge. Inheriting the traditional culture of ethnic minorities is not only the cherishment and inheritance of ethnic traditions, but also an effective way to popularize ethnic knowledge. Through the inheritance of traditional festivals, folk art, languages, etc. Ethnic knowledge is activated and widely disseminated, thereby enhancing people's understanding and recognition of ethnic minority culture, history, and values; On the other hand, there is the integration of various cultural resources function. Culture is the sum of material wealth and spiritual wealth created by people in long-term social practice. Shils(2009) believes that culture needs to be passed down twice through at least three generations before it can become a tradition. Therefore, the cultural resources of every nation include two aspects: material cultural resources and intangible cultural resources. Material cultural resources include architecture, clothing, food, etc. Intangible cultural resources include literature, festivals, marriage customs, etc. National crafts and folk arts and crafts are also important contents of national culture, they provide a carrier for the inheritance of national culture.

Current Status of Cultural Inheritance

With the rapid development of mobile network technology and the gradual formation of a social environment of economic integration and cultural diversity. China is in a period of transformation, and the cultural heritage of ethnic minorities is challenged. Since China officially joined the 'Agreement on the Protection of World Intangible Cultural Heritage', it has formulated the 'Intangible Cultural Heritage Law of the People's Republic of China ', which fully demonstrates the importance attached to its inheritance and protection at the national level, and through policy subsidies, tax exemptions, etc. The method encourages all sectors of society to participate in the promotion and protection of intangible culture in ethnic minority areas(Chang, 2016). By proactively taking remedial measures and establishing relevant policies to protect traditional culture, with the efforts of all sectors of society, significant results have been achieved in the initial development, but in terms of its overall development, the social influence of national cultural heritage still needs to be improved.

Dilemma of Cultural Inheritance

Under the background of today's globalization and modernization, the rapid social and economic development will inevitably bring unprecedented impact to the culture of ethnic minorities. First, as the main mode of cultural inheritance of ethnic minorities, the family inheritance mode is facing realistic impact. In the process of China's modernization, changes in production methods have led to changes in the traditional family structure of ethnic minorities, which directly gave rise to empty-nest families and left-behind children. Family education is declining, which has a direct impact on the protection and inheritance of minority culture (Cheng, 2012). Second, school education increasingly appears to be inadequate in inheriting ethnic minority cultures. National culture includes a nation's history, geography, customs, traditional customs, etc. In school inheritance, how to sort out these contents, how to define the scope of inheritance, which cultures can be infused with elements of the times to make them go further, and how to mediate the conflict between mainstream culture and folk culture among the student group, these are all difficulties faced by school education. Finally, external culture influences group identity. The development of transportation and the application of modern information technology in ethnic minority areas have greatly deepened exchanges between different ethnic areas, and allowed ethnic minority compatriots to feel the convenience of modern life and the influence of mainstream culture. Many people, especially the younger generation, have discovered many shortcomings in their traditional lives through comparison.

Literature Review on Community Education's Participation in Cultural Heritage

Advantages of participation

Community education has the characteristics of regionality, two-way service between education and society, and extensive social participation. The distribution characteristics of China's ethnic minorities of 'large mixed residences and small settlements' give ethnic minority areas distinct regional characteristics. The community population density is low, the settlement scale is small, the economic type is relatively single, mainly agriculture and animal husbandry, there are few occupational types, and the social structure is relatively simple, the role of the family is relatively important in community life, most people believe in religion, and the religious upper class have high social status and influence in the community, and have unique national traditional culture. And under the policy of regional ethnic autonomy, ethnic minority people have higher enthusiasm for community activities that are beneficial to the development of their own ethnic groups. These conditions provide favorable community resources for community education. In particular, the rich traditional culture in minority areas, such as material cultural resources such as architecture, clothing, and food, and intangible cultural resources such as language, literature, festivals, music, and dance, are very important community education resources, which can educate in the community to promote the protection and inheritance of national culture. Therefore, community education has a solid foundation for survival and development, and can play its due role in the inheritance of national culture.

Significance of Participation

The significance of ethnic minority community education in inheriting traditional ethnic culture is mainly reflected in the following three aspects. First, it is conducive to building a national spiritual home and strengthening exchanges and integration among various ethnic

groups. The traditional culture of ethnic minorities can only develop and progress through exchanges and integration, absorbing different ethnic cultures, and deeply exploring the value connotation of traditional ethnic culture. Community education has the characteristics of grassroots, locality and flexibility. It can provide various ethnic groups with the best field to inherit and carry forward their traditional culture, promote cultural communication and integration among various ethnic groups, and thus promote the development of ethnic groups. The construction of spiritual home. Second, it is conducive to the intergenerational inheritance of national culture and the maintenance of the basic elements of national culture. The cultural habitats of ethnic community members, including their production and lifestyle, ideas, family structures, and living environments, are undergoing a series of changes. The environment for inheriting traditional ethnic culture is not optimistic. Ethnic minority community education is a spontaneous and universal folk inheritance activity that is closely related to the lives of ethnic people. It can increase the opportunities and space for the younger generation to contact ethnic culture, cultivate their love for ethnic culture and their enthusiasm and creativity in protecting ethnic culture. So that the basic elements of national culture and the values they carry can be preserved. Third, it is conducive to serving the economy of ethnic minority areas and promoting the overall progress and prosperity of society. The rational development and utilization of ethnic cultural resources is itself a sign of respect for ethnic minorities, can enhance the national self-esteem and pride of community members, and is conducive to promoting the common development and prosperity of all ethnic groups(Wang & Kong, 2019).

Internal Logic

There is an organic connection between community education and the traditional culture of ethnic minorities, and national cultural characteristics are the common characteristics of both. Traditional culture such as ethnic songs and dances, ethnic festivals, religious sacrifices, ethnic customs and etiquette are the spiritual food of ethnic minorities. The corresponding ethnic minority community education is based on the better survival and development of all members of the community as the starting point and destination. Traditional ethnic cultural activities are the carrier of community education, and the content of traditional ethnic culture is the main content of community education inheritance. The two are consistent in basic elements such as educators, educated people, educational places, and educational content.

The traditional education inheritance model can no longer adapt to the rapid changes in modern social culture. The traditional family education function has been seriously weakened and is far from the actual life of ethnic minority students. Ethnic minority community education takes the inheritance of traditional ethnic culture as the main content and the promotion of excellent ethnic culture as the focus of work. It continuously enriches the lives of community members. spiritual life(Cao & Wang, 2009).

Strategies of Participation

Establish the concept of lifelong education and strengthen the awareness of community education inheritance. Lifelong education is the trend and trend of world education development. Ethnic minority community education needs to actively establish the concept of lifelong education development, and based on China's national conditions and the

actual situation of ethnic minorities, explore and form its own characteristic model according to local conditions, that is, based on the concept of lifelong education Take the lead in developing distinctive community education.

Integrate community education resources, enhance the overall understanding of traditional culture, and integrate scattered and fragmented cultural elements through various methods to make full use of them. Increase government support, connect with the actual conditions of the ethnic group and region, comprehensively consider the psychological characteristics and cultural differences of ethnic minorities, and on this basis, establish and improve a practical and feasible community education operation mechanism.

Mobilize all sectors of society and optimize the community education workforce. The innovative inheritance of traditional national culture not only requires mobilizing the enthusiasm of local people, but also requires government departments to adopt policies and measures to encourage and attract backbone forces such as enterprises, social groups, non-governmental organizations, experts and scholars to devote themselves to the inheritance of national culture.

Strengthen legislative and administrative guidance and improve legal and regulatory protection mechanisms. The establishment of a four-level protection system of "national-province-city-county" requires the implementation of the policy of 'protection first, rescue first, rational utilization, inheritance and development', and effectively protect, manage and rationally utilize intangible cultural heritage.

Conclusion

All cultural inheritance is ultimately manifested in a variety of specific symbols, such as architecture, language, and rituals. The intergenerational transmission of these symbols constitutes the cultural inheritance of an ethnic group. In an era of frequent cultural contact and cultural changes, a nation should pay special attention to the protection and use of its own cultural symbols in order to better inherit its culture amidst changes.

Paying attention to the inheritance of traditional national culture does not mean being conservative. The development of national culture has always been achieved on the basis of maintaining the cultural characteristics of one's own nation while absorbing the culture of other nations. Therefore, we need to help people form a cultural identity concept that is dialectically unified with nationality and openness. While attaching importance to the revitalization of traditional culture, community education should also include scientific and technological education, moral education, legal education, health education and other aspects to help all members of ethnic minorities comprehensively improve their self-development abilities and quality of life, and achieve economic and social development in ethnic minority areas. and the protection of traditional culture and the coordination of the two to promote the harmonious development of ethnic areas.

Through a systematic literature review, this study comprehensively comprehends the current research status of community education in traditional culture transmission in China, filling the gap of systematic research in this field. Firstly, this study summarises the practice

models and effectiveness of community education in different cultural contexts, revealing the unique advantages of community education in the transmission of traditional Chinese culture. Second, by analysing the key themes and trends in existing research, this study proposes potential challenges and development directions for community education in cultural transmission, providing valuable references for policy makers and educational practitioners. Finally, this study provides new perspectives for future research and practice, encouraging more interdisciplinary collaboration to enhance the impact of community education in cultural transmission. Through this study, we expect to promote the in-depth development of community education in the field of cultural heritage, so as to better protect and promote China's traditional culture.

However, this study still has shortcomings. It may be limited to literature review and analysis, and lacks in-depth investigation and case studies of actual community education projects. Therefore, there may be insufficient understanding of the practical application and effectiveness of community education. The CNKI database was used, which lacks representative and high-quality literature outside China. Furthermore, relying solely on peer-reviewed and online accessible journals may ignore some important non-academic literature and practical experience.

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