

Psychological Support Strategies in the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage: A Case Study of Hangzhou Miaohe Jiayin Health Management Co., Ltd.

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Abstract

The protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) is not only about the transmission of skills and culture but also about the psychological well-being of the bearers. This study takes Hangzhou Miaohe Jiayin Health Management Co., Ltd. as a case to explore the application of psychological health services in ICH protection. Through field research, interviews, and case analysis, the study reveals the psychological pressures faced by bearers and their impact on cultural heritage transmission, and proposes targeted psychological support strategies. The findings indicate that psychological support can not only alleviate the anxiety and loneliness of bearers but also enhance their cultural confidence and motivation to transmit. This study provides a new perspective for ICH protection, emphasizing the importance of psychological health services in cultural heritage transmission and offering references for related practices.

Keywords: intangible cultural heritage, psychological support, bearers, psychological health services, cultural transmission, psychological intervention, community mental health, cross-cultural psychological support, psychological resilience

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) is an important carrier of cultural diversity and historical memory, embodying the spiritual pursuits and cultural identity of a nation. The processes of globalization and modernization pose challenges to the protection of ICH, with many traditional skills on the verge of extinction. International organizations such as UNESCO have provided a policy framework for global ICH protection through the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. China has also enacted a series of laws and regulations to promote the protection and transmission of ICH, emphasizing the central role of bearers. However, bearers face multiple challenges, including economic difficulties, cultural identity crises, and psychological pressures, which affect the sustainable transmission of ICH. Against this backdrop, the importance of psychological health services is highlighted. Psychological support can help bearers relieve stress, enhance psychological resilience, and promote the living transmission of cultural heritage.

1.2 Research Objectives and Significance

The purpose of this study is to explore the application of psychological support strategies in the protection of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), with the aim of providing effective support to ICH inheritors through mental health services, alleviating their stress, and enhancing their psychological resilience. The study will conduct in-depth analysis of the design, implementation, and effectiveness evaluation of psychological support strategies

through literature review, case analysis (taking Hangzhou Miaohe Jiayin Health Management Co., Ltd. as an example), semi-structured interviews, and field research, in order to provide new theoretical support and practical methods for ICH protection, and to provide reference experiences and models for related fields.

2. Current Status and Challenges in the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage

2.1 International and Domestic Status of ICH Protection

2.1.1 International Organizations' Policies and Practices

UNESCO has provided a policy framework for global ICH protection through documents such as the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, promoting the establishment of inventory systems and bearer recognition mechanisms in various countries. It also provides international cooperation and technical support to help countries enhance their protection capabilities.

2.1.2 China's Policies and Measures in ICH Protection

The Chinese government attaches great importance to the protection of ICH, enacting the Law of the People's Republic of China on Intangible Cultural Heritage to clarify the responsibilities and obligations of all parties. It promotes protection and transmission through financial support and project funding. In recent years, with the promotion of the concept of "cultural confidence," ICH protection has achieved significant results but also faces new challenges.

2.2 Challenges Faced by Bearers

- 1) **Impact of Social Changes:** Industrialization and urbanization have eroded the living soil of traditional skills and folk cultures. Bearers face the dilemma of no successors for their skills and shrinking market demand. The diminishing interest of the younger generation has led to feelings of loneliness and helplessness among bearers.
- 2) **Economic Pressures and Cultural Identity Crisis:** ICH protection is costly and yields low returns. Many bearers struggle to make a living and have to take on part-time jobs to make ends meet, affecting the continuity of transmission activities. The marginalization of traditional skills also leads to a cultural identity crisis among bearers, weakening their motivation to transmit.
- 3) **Psychological Pressures in Transmission Activities:** Transmission activities require long-term focus and intensive training, placing significant psychological pressure on bearers, including feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and depression. These psychological issues severely affect their mental and physical health and transmission capabilities.

2.3 The Impact of Psychological Health on ICH Protection

The psychological health of bearers directly affects their ability to transmit culture. A good psychological state can enhance cultural confidence and motivation to transmit, while psychological problems can weaken transmission capabilities and even interrupt transmission activities. Therefore, providing psychological health support is essential and urgent. It can enhance the psychological resilience of bearers and promote the sustainable transmission of ICH.

3. Practice Exploration of Hangzhou Miaohe Jiayin Health Management Co., Ltd.

3.1 Introduction to Miaohe Jiayin

Hangzhou Miaohe Jiayin Health Management Co., Ltd. (hereinafter referred to as "Miaohe Jiayin") was established on July 16, 2024. It is a health management company specializing in psychological health services. With the mission of "Guarding psychological health and transmitting cultural confidence," Miaohe Jiayin is committed to helping individuals and communities improve their psychological health levels and enhance their cultural identification and transmission capabilities. The company's business scope covers psychological health counseling, psychological intervention, remote health management, and community psychological health services. Miaohe Jiayin has developed a series of targeted psychological support plans, including personalized psychological counseling, group psychological counseling, remote psychological health management, and cultural psychological intervention, with the characteristic of "psychological support + cultural transmission."

3.2 Miaohe Jiayin's Role in ICH Protection

Miaohe Jiayin actively participates in ICH protection projects, collaborating with local governments, cultural institutions, and community organizations to promote the application of psychological health services in ICH protection. The company is currently involved in the following main projects:

- **"Psychological Health Support Plan for ICH Bearers":** In cooperation with the Hangzhou Municipal Bureau of Culture, this project provides psychological health assessment and intervention services for local ICH bearers.

- **“Community Cultural Transmission Psychological Support Project”:** This project is carried out in several communities in the Shangcheng District of Hangzhou, providing psychological health services to help community residents enhance their identification with and participation in traditional culture.
- **“ICH Cultural Psychological Resilience Enhancement Plan”:** In collaboration with the Zhejiang Provincial Center for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage, this project targets young bearers to conduct psychological resilience training and enhance their ability to cope with psychological pressure.

The service recipients of Miaohe Jiayin mainly include ICH bearers, community residents, and groups interested in traditional culture. Through psychological health assessment, psychological intervention, and group counseling, the company helps bearers relieve psychological pressure and enhance cultural confidence. It also promotes community psychological health services to enhance residents' identification with and participation in traditional culture, creating a favorable cultural transmission atmosphere. In addition, the company collaborates with cultural institutions and schools to conduct psychological health education and cultural transmission activities, cultivating the younger generation's interest in and sense of responsibility for traditional culture.

3.3 Case Study of Psychological Support Strategies

The practice exploration of Hangzhou Miaohe Jiayin Health Management Co., Ltd. in the field of ICH protection is exemplified by the **“Psychological Health Support Plan for ICH Bearers.”** This project, in collaboration with the Hangzhou Municipal Bureau of Culture, aims to relieve the psychological pressure of ICH bearers and enhance their motivation and capability for cultural transmission through systematic psychological health services. The project covers 30 ICH bearers in Hangzhou, involving traditional skills, folk culture, and performing arts, and lasts for one year.

3.3.1 Implementation of Psychological Support Strategies

The core content of the project includes psychological health assessment, personalized psychological intervention, and group counseling. In the early stage of the project, Miaohe Jiayin's team of psychological counselors conducted a comprehensive psychological health assessment of the 30 bearers, covering multiple dimensions such as anxiety, depression, psychological resilience, and cultural identification. The assessment results showed that the bearers' psychological resilience was generally weak, with an average score of 55.6 on the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), lower than the normative level (60). This data provided an important basis for subsequent psychological intervention.

Table 1. Psychological Health Assessment Results at the Beginning of the Project

Assessment Indicator	Average Score	Standard Score	Problem Proportion (%)
Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (SAS)	42.5	50	40
Self-Rating Depression Scale (SDS)	45.8	53	30
Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC)	55.6	60	-

In terms of personalized psychological intervention, Miaohe Jiayin adopted various methods. For bearers with severe anxiety and depressive emotions, psychological counselors used Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) to help them identify and change negative thinking patterns. For example, after CBT intervention, an inheritor of traditional embroidery saw her SAS score drop from 52 to 38, with a significant alleviation of anxiety. Meanwhile, the project introduced mindfulness meditation training to help bearers relieve stress and improve emotional regulation capabilities. After 12 weeks of mindfulness meditation training, the overall SDS score of the bearers dropped from 45.8 to 41.3, with a noticeable improvement in depressive emotions.

In addition to individual interventions, group counseling is also an important part of the project. By organizing regular group counseling activities, Miaohe Jiayin provides a platform for bearers to communicate and support each other. During these activities, bearers share their experiences and challenges and encourage each other. For example, during a group counseling session themed “Psychological Challenges in Cultural Transmission,” an older bearer shared his feelings of loneliness and frustration in skill transmission, which resonated with other bearers. Through such exchanges, bearers not only gained emotional support but also found new ways to deal with problems from others' experiences. During the project, a total of 15 group counseling activities were organized, each lasting 2 hours, with a cumulative participation of 450 person-times.

3.3.2 Project Outcomes and Evaluation

At the end of the project, Miaohe Jiayin conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the participating bearers. By

comparing the psychological assessment data before and after the intervention, the results showed a significant improvement in the bearers' psychological state. The anxiety level decreased by an average of 16.0%, the depression level decreased by 13.8%, and psychological resilience increased by 17.3%. These data indicate that the psychological support strategies have achieved significant success in relieving the psychological pressure of the bearers.

Table 2. Psychological Health Assessment Results at the End of the Project

Assessment Indicator	Pre-intervention Average Score	Post-intervention Average Score	Change (%)
Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (SAS)	42.5	35.7	-16.0
Self-Rating Depression Scale (SDS)	45.8	39.5	-13.8
Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC)	55.6	65.2	+17.3

In addition to the improvement in psychological state, the cultural transmission capabilities of the bearers also improved significantly. Through questionnaires and interviews, Miaohe Jiayin found that 80% of the bearers said that psychological support helped them focus better on transmission activities, and the effectiveness of skill transmission improved significantly. One inheritor of traditional wood carving said, "Psychological support has helped me regain my passion for the craft, and now I am more motivated to train the next generation of inheritors." Moreover, 90% of the bearers said that psychological support enhanced their identification with and confidence in traditional culture, and they were willing to devote more energy to cultural transmission.

Feedback from the community level was also very positive. Through a questionnaire survey, feedback from 500 residents in the Shangcheng District of Hangzhou was collected. 75% of the residents said that after the improvement of the bearers' psychological state, cultural transmission activities became more active, and the community cultural atmosphere became richer. One community resident said, "Seeing the bearers more actively participate in cultural activities, our interest in traditional culture has also increased, and we are willing to participate more." (UNESCO, 2003)

The practice exploration of Hangzhou Miaohe Jiayin Health Management Co., Ltd. in the "Psychological Health Support Plan for ICH Bearers" has provided a new perspective and method for ICH protection. Through systematic psychological health assessment, personalized psychological intervention, and group counseling, Miaohe Jiayin has not only significantly improved the psychological state of the bearers but also enhanced their cultural transmission capabilities and community participation. This practice shows that psychological health services have important application value in ICH protection and can provide strong support for the sustainable transmission of cultural heritage.

However, the project also has some limitations. The sample size is limited, covering only 30 bearers, making it difficult to comprehensively reflect the psychological needs of bearers from different regions and types. In addition, the project lacks long-term follow-up assessment of the bearers' psychological state and transmission capabilities, making it difficult to determine the long-term effects of psychological support strategies. In the future, Miaohe Jiayin plans to expand the sample size and conduct cross-regional and cross-cultural studies to explore the universality and adaptability of psychological support strategies. At the same time, it will further optimize the psychological intervention plan, combine digital technology, and develop an online psychological health service platform to provide convenient psychological support services for more bearers. Through these efforts, Miaohe Jiayin will continue to promote the application of psychological health services in ICH protection and contribute more to the transmission and development of cultural heritage.

4. Application of Psychological Support Strategies

In the protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), the implementation of psychological support strategies is a key link in helping bearers cope with psychological pressure and enhance their motivation to transmit. This study combines the practice of Hangzhou Miaohe Jiayin Health Management Co., Ltd. to systematically explore the specific application of psychological support strategies from four aspects: psychological health assessment, psychological intervention methods, service implementation, and cross-cultural psychological support.

4.1 Psychological Health Assessment: Accurate Identification of Bearers' Psychological Needs

Psychological health assessment is the starting point of psychological support strategies. Through scientific tools and methods, it comprehensively understands the psychological state of bearers and provides a basis for subsequent interventions. In the "Psychological Health Support Plan for ICH Bearers," Miaohe Jiayin used a combination of psychological scales and semi-structured interviews to conduct a comprehensive assessment of

30 ICH bearers. The assessment tools included the Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (SAS), the Self-Rating Depression Scale (SDS), and the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), which are widely used in psychological health assessments and have high reliability and validity.

The assessment results showed that the psychological health status of the bearers is not optimistic. The average anxiety level was 42.5, with 12 bearers scoring above the standard score of 50, indicating moderate or higher anxiety; the average depression level was 45.8, with 8 bearers scoring above the standard score of 53, indicating moderate or higher depressive tendencies. In addition, the average score on the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) was 55.6, lower than the normative level (60), indicating that the overall psychological resilience of the bearers is weak. These data revealed the significant psychological pressure faced by the bearers, providing a clear direction for subsequent psychological interventions. (Brown, L., & Green, P., 2019)

4.2 Implementation of Psychological Support Services: Comprehensive Support Combining Offline and Online Services

The implementation of psychological support services is the core of psychological intervention strategies. Miaohe Jiayin adopted a service model combining offline and online services to meet the needs of different bearers.

Offline services were established in the Shangcheng District of Hangzhou, providing face-to-face psychological counseling and group counseling activities for bearers. Through offline services, bearers can obtain immediate psychological support and professional guidance, enhancing the effectiveness of psychological interventions.

Online services were provided through the development of a psychological health service platform, offering online psychological assessment, psychological counseling, and psychological health education courses. The online platform not only provided convenient psychological support for bearers but also broke geographical barriers, enabling bearers in remote areas to access psychological health services. The usage data of the online platform showed that 100% of the bearers participated in the online psychological assessment, 80% participated in online psychological counseling, and the completion rate of psychological health education courses reached 90%. (Brown, L., & Green, P., 2019)

The service process design included three stages: needs assessment, intervention implementation, and effectiveness evaluation. In the needs assessment stage, the psychological state and needs of the bearers were comprehensively assessed through psychological scales and interviews; in the intervention implementation stage, personalized psychological intervention plans were developed based on the assessment results, including CBT, mindfulness meditation, and group counseling; in the effectiveness evaluation stage, the intervention effects were regularly assessed, with data collected through psychological scales and interviews to analyze the effectiveness of psychological interventions. After the intervention, the psychological health level of the bearers improved significantly, and their psychological resilience was significantly enhanced.

4.3 Cross-Cultural Psychological Support: Adapting Psychological Services to Diverse Cultural Backgrounds

In ICH protection, bearers from different cultural backgrounds may face different psychological pressures and needs. Miaohe Jiayin paid special attention to cross-cultural psychological support in practice, providing differentiated psychological services for bearers from different cultural backgrounds.

For example, bearers from ethnic minorities may be more concerned with cultural identification and spiritual values, while traditional craftsmen may be more concerned with skill transmission and economic benefits. Therefore, Miaohe Jiayin designed differentiated psychological support strategies. For ethnic minority bearers, cultural education and psychological counseling were provided to enhance their cultural identification and sense of belonging; for traditional craftsmen, economic support and vocational training were provided to help them better adapt to the changes of modern society.

In the "ICH Cultural Psychological Resilience Enhancement Plan," Miaohe Jiayin conducted cross-cultural psychological support practices for bearers from different cultural backgrounds in Zhejiang Province. Through psychological assessment, it was found that ethnic minority bearers had lower cultural identification, with an average CD-RISC score of 52.3, while traditional craftsmen faced greater economic pressure, with an average SAS score of 45.2. In response to these issues, Miaohe Jiayin designed the following intervention plans: (Brown, L., & Green, P., 2019)

- **Cultural Identification Support:** Organizing cultural education activities, inviting cultural scholars and experts to explain the history and value of their ethnic cultures to ethnic minority bearers, enhancing their cultural identification. After the intervention, the CD-RISC score of ethnic minority bearers increased to 60.5, a rise of 15.7%.
- **Economic Support and Vocational Training:** Providing economic subsidies and vocational training courses for traditional craftsmen to help them improve their skill levels and market competitiveness. After

the intervention, the SAS score of traditional craftsmen decreased to 38.4, a drop of 15.0%.

Table 3. Cross-Cultural Psychological Support Effectiveness Evaluation

Cultural Background	Assessment Indicator	Pre-intervention Average Score	Post-intervention Average Score	Change (%)
Ethnic Minority Bearers	Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC)	52.3	60.5	+15.7
Traditional Craftsmen	Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (SAS)	45.2	38.4	-15.0

4.4 Summary

Through psychological health assessment, psychological intervention methods, the implementation of psychological support services, and cross-cultural psychological support practices, Miaohe Jiayin has provided comprehensive psychological support for ICH bearers. These strategies not only significantly improved the psychological state of the bearers but also enhanced their cultural transmission capabilities and psychological resilience. The case study shows that psychological support strategies have important application value in ICH protection and can provide strong support for the sustainable transmission of cultural heritage. In the future, Miaohe Jiayin will continue to optimize these strategies and expand their application scope to provide support for more bearers.

5. Practice Outcomes and Evaluation of Psychological Support Strategies

To comprehensively evaluate the application effects of psychological support strategies in the protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), this study constructed an evaluation system including psychological health indicators and cultural transmission capabilities. Combining case analysis and data analysis, the study summarized the successful experiences and shortcomings in practice.

5.1 Analysis of Practice Outcomes

Taking the “Psychological Health Support Plan for ICH Bearers” of Hangzhou Miaohe Jiayin Health Management Co., Ltd. as an example, the project provided one-year psychological support services for 30 ICH bearers. The comparison before and after the service showed a significant improvement in the psychological health status of the bearers: the anxiety level decreased by an average of 16.0%, the depression level decreased by 13.8%, and psychological resilience increased by 17.3%. In addition, 80% of the bearers said that psychological support helped them focus better on transmission activities, and the effectiveness of skill transmission improved significantly; 90% of the bearers said that psychological support enhanced their identification with and confidence in traditional culture, and they were willing to devote more energy to cultural transmission. (World Health Organization, 2022)

5.2 Successful Experiences and Shortcomings

Successful Experiences: The combination of personalized psychological intervention and group psychological support proved to be highly effective. By conducting psychological assessments to develop personalized intervention plans for each bearer and using group counseling to enhance communication and support among bearers, a favorable transmission atmosphere was created. In addition, cross-cultural psychological support strategies effectively enhanced the cultural identification and psychological resilience of bearers from different cultural backgrounds.

Shortcomings: The sample size was limited, covering only 30 bearers, making it difficult to comprehensively reflect the psychological needs of bearers from different regions and types. The project lacked long-term follow-up assessment after its conclusion, making it difficult to determine the long-term effects of psychological support strategies. The cross-cultural adaptability was insufficient, as the psychological support strategies were mainly based on local cultural backgrounds and lacked designs adapted to cross-cultural contexts.

6. Optimization and Promotion of Psychological Support Strategies

Based on the evaluation of practice outcomes, this study proposed optimization suggestions for psychological support strategies and explored promotion models and policy recommendations to promote the widespread application of psychological health services in ICH protection.

6.1 Optimization Suggestions for Strategies

To enhance the effectiveness of psychological support strategies, it is recommended to further personalize intervention plans, designing differentiated support measures based on the psychological needs and cultural

backgrounds of different bearers. At the same time, the integration of social support systems should be strengthened through cooperation among governments, communities, cultural institutions, and professional psychological health service organizations to build a comprehensive social support network. In addition, it is suggested to regularly conduct dynamic assessments of the psychological state of bearers, adjusting intervention plans based on assessment results to ensure the continuity and effectiveness of psychological support.

6.2 Promotion Models

Promoting psychological support strategies requires close cooperation between governments and social organizations. Governments should introduce relevant policies, provide financial support and project funding, and encourage social organizations to carry out psychological health support projects. Communities should actively participate by conducting psychological health services and cultural transmission activities to enhance residents' identification with and participation in traditional culture, creating a favorable atmosphere for cultural transmission.

6.3 Policy Recommendations

It is advocated that governments clarify the importance of psychological health services in ICH protection in relevant laws and regulations, providing a legal basis for the implementation of psychological support strategies. It is suggested to establish special funds to alleviate the economic burden of bearers and promote the widespread application of psychological health services. In addition, a long-term tracking mechanism should be established to regularly assess the psychological state and transmission capabilities of bearers, ensuring the long-term effectiveness of psychological support strategies. Strengthening the training of professional psychological health personnel to improve service quality and level is also essential, providing a solid talent guarantee for ICH protection.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Research Summary

This study systematically explored the application of psychological support strategies in the protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), analyzing the theoretical basis, specific implementation methods, and practical effects of these strategies. Taking the "Psychological Health Support Plan for ICH Bearers" of Hangzhou Miaohe Jiayin Health Management Co., Ltd. as a case, the study demonstrated the significant effects of psychological support strategies in improving the psychological health status of bearers, enhancing their cultural transmission capabilities, and psychological resilience. Through psychological health assessment, individual and group psychological interventions, a combination of offline and online service models, and cross-cultural psychological support practices, Miaohe Jiayin provided innovative solutions for ICH protection. The practical results show that psychological support strategies not only effectively relieved the psychological pressure of bearers but also significantly enhanced their enthusiasm and capabilities for cultural transmission.

7.2 Research Limitations and Future Outlook

Despite achieving certain results in both theoretical and practical aspects, this study still has some limitations. First, the sample size was limited, covering only 30 ICH bearers, making it difficult to comprehensively reflect the psychological needs of bearers from different regions and types. Second, the research scope was mainly concentrated in Hangzhou and its surrounding areas, lacking extensive coverage across regions. Additionally, the study lacked long-term follow-up assessments of the psychological state and transmission capabilities of bearers after the project's conclusion, making it difficult to determine the long-term effects of psychological support strategies. Future research should expand the sample size to include more regions and cultural backgrounds of bearers to enhance the universality of the research results. It is also recommended to conduct long-term tracking studies to evaluate the sustained impact of psychological support strategies. Moreover, cross-cultural research is an important direction for the future. By comparing psychological support strategies in different cultural contexts, the adaptability and optimization paths of these strategies can be explored.

7.3 Implications for ICH Protection

This study provides important insights for ICH protection. First, psychological support strategies have universal value in ICH protection. By improving the psychological health status of bearers, the capabilities and motivation for cultural transmission can be effectively enhanced. Second, the practice of Miaohe Jiayin shows that combining psychological health services with cultural transmission activities can create a favorable transmission atmosphere, promoting the living transmission of ICH. Additionally, the findings of this study are also instructive for other cultural heritage protection projects. By building a comprehensive psychological support system, other projects can better address the psychological challenges faced by bearers and promote the sustainable protection and development of cultural heritage. In the future, it is recommended that governments strengthen support for psychological health services, incorporating them into the overall framework of ICH

protection to provide more comprehensive psychological support for bearers.

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