

Digital Media Strategies for the Global Dissemination of Intangible Cultural Heritage: A Systematic Review of Communication Approaches

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ABSTRACT

Due to the development of new media technologies, global dissemination of actual examples of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) has become easier and faster. Due to its diverse traditional arts and cultural practices, China presents a case showing how ICH is being preserved and disseminated via new technologies such as social media, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence. However, concerns of authenticity, commercialization, and elasticity, especially regarding access, are valid and persist. This study aimed to: (1) identify and critically analyze digital media strategies used in the global dissemination of ICH in China, (2) explore how digital media shapes audience reception and engagement with ICH across cultures, and (3) examine theoretical frameworks and methodologies used in existing literature. This research paper used a systematic literature review to collect information from Web of Science, Google Scholar and JSTOR. Twelve articles were included following the PRISMA guidelines, and a thematic analysis was conducted. Social media and other digital tools, such as VR, helped to improve the level of interaction and involvement of the audience. Nevertheless, cultural, sample, and algorithm biases were identified as risks. It emerged that both AI and holographic technologies are efficient tools for expanding the dissemination horizons internationally, and grounded theory and bibliometric analysis were identified as efficient approaches for creating dissemination frameworks. Digital media strategies offer promising solutions for ICH dissemination but require culturally sensitive approaches to protect authenticity and equitable access.

Keywords: Global Dissemination, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Digital Media, Communication Approaches.

INTRODUCTION

The global dissemination of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) is increasingly supported by digital media, a pivotal tool in transforming how culture, traditions, and heritage are shared across the world. Intangible cultural heritage, which includes practices, expressions, knowledge, and skills that communities recognize as part of their cultural heritage, faces significant challenges in the age of globalization. Digital media technologies, such as social media platforms, websites, and mobile applications, have offered new methods to preserve and promote ICH while ensuring it reaches a broad, often global, audience, as stated by Jiang (2024). In particular, China's intangible cultural heritage, with its deep historical roots and diverse cultural elements, offers an intriguing case of how digital tools can facilitate both the preservation and dissemination of cultural knowledge globally.

The advent of digital media has brought about a paradigm shift in how cultures are transmitted. Most of the detached media types, such as radio, television, and print media, have been complemented or substituted by the active web. Technology interfaces allow individuals from different parts of the world to interact, learn about, as

well as get exposure to cultures they may never physically interact with, as noted by Y. Zhang (2024). Nevertheless, the process of digitizing the culture and heritage brings to light many concerns, such as the genuineness of the culture and its availability to the public and the commercialization of culture, as stated by Lai and Bai (2021). It also provides opportunities for such users to investigate how people of different cultures create and exchange content that can be both enjoyed and protected with the help of such possibilities provided by the modern world.

The dissemination of ICH has evolved dramatically in China, especially as far as traditional crafts, performing arts, and festivals are concerned, with their presentation in the electronic format. These technologies include virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and the use of 360-degree video to capture and present the cultural endowment of China. They use effective technologies to interact with the heritage in a once inconceivable way, as noted by J. Ren (2024). Finally, the digitization of archives and the development of cultural digital resources play essential roles in the protection of heritage while at the same time making it open to the public, as discussed by L. Ren, Guo, and Li (2024).

Research has revealed that social media plays a significant part in the spread of culture. Of the current tools that have been introduced, some have received some attention in China's cultural dissemination, particularly in the recent past through short videos and live streaming, which will, in a big way, assist in the visibility of cultural heritage among the youth and other generations who are more inclined in technological advancement, as noted by Y. Zhang (2024). It has been established that these new media forms have been part of the reason why younger generations show interest in ICH when it is incorporated with a more interactive component, as stated by Lai and Bai (2021).

Nevertheless, there are challenges related to maintaining the integrity and authenticity of the culture in postmodern formats. Some challenges include commercialization and misrepresentation of culture, distortion of traditions, and distribution disparity between the well-connected urban centers and the underrepresented rural regions in the promotion of ICH. Moreover, the application of new media technology often lacks adequate consideration of local contexts and cultural sensitivities, which may lead to misinterpretations or a dilution of cultural significance, as noted by Y. Xiao, Yu, and T. Xiao (2024).

Digitalization is an auspicious way to help save and disseminate the culture of the world. However, several questions arise about how cultural heritage is presented in the digital environment. Several gaps were identified in the existing literature. For instance, there is no definite standard for how ICH can be preserved in the digital environment, and the availability of digital platforms in different parts of the world. At the same time, China's ICH is a rich cultural heritage of the country. However, applying such a rich heritage to presenting traditions that can be understood and followed in other countries is a challenge, as noted by Y. Zhang (2024); Lai and Bai (2021). Furthermore, the commercialization of heritage in the digital space, while enhancing global visibility, may undermine the cultural value and meaning inherent in ICH, as stated by J. Wang (2023). This research aims to address these challenges by critically examining digital media strategies and their role in overcoming barriers to effective dissemination, ensuring that China's ICH is not only preserved but also promoted with cultural integrity.

Research Objectives

- To identify and critically analyze digital media strategies used in the global dissemination of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), with a focus on the case of China
- To explore how digital media shapes global audience reception and engagement with intangible cultural heritage across diverse cultural contexts, using China's heritage
- To examine the theoretical frameworks and methodologies applied in research on digital media dissemination of intangible cultural heritage, drawing insights from studies related to China.

This research aims to examine the various digital media approaches to the promotion of ICH in China with a view to discovering ways through which cultures of the world can be preserved and passed across borders. With culture playing a critical role in the use of digital media in the dissemination of information, this study aims to establish how cross-media communication practice would enhance interaction with the international community without compromising on the cultural aspects, as stated by Shen (2024). Also, the research shall propose how the new communication tools can prevent ICH from being commercialized and misrepresented on digital platforms, as noted by Y. Zhang (2024). Thus, it will provide valuable knowledge to cultural institutions that will help to develop guidelines for the implementation of more effective digital preservation and, therefore, support the worldwide promotion of cultural interchange.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital Media Strategies Used in the Global Dissemination of Ich, With a Focus on the Case of China

The digital dissemination of information about intangible cultural heritage through the use of electronic media has perhaps become one of the best ways of passing the tradition in a modern society that is quickly embracing the facet of the digital world. However, like any other form of communication, the process does not lack one or two hitches. Liang (2019) discusses the significance of using media literacy as a mediated element while promoting ICH in the context of the Tujia people. The study focuses on the fact that ethnicity, with regard to media literacy and its relation to participation in digital media, may pose questions about the prejudice/product construction of cultural identity. This supports the need for media education to be sufficient in the preservation of ICH in the digital arena. Maags (2018) adds another layer of complexity to the digital transmission process by explaining the existing hierarchies and competition in Chinese ICH transmission. A number of provoking discussions have emerged from these findings, pointing to the emerging forms of power relations that define what cultural artifacts are shared in the digital sphere, that is, the way Chinese cultural heritage is represented in the global digital domain. Such a top-down approach, where the authorized narratives are initiated at the state level, and state-approved versions of cultural heritage are promoted, may raise awareness but make it difficult for lesser-known cultures and traditions to come to the surface, which may lead to the ranking.

Wei (2024) seems to focus on digital protection, as well as the strategies adopted in Weinan, in order to pass on the ICH to the next generations. This work involves the analysis of how the network media can be used for the protection of intangible cultural forms. Wei (2024) suggests that digital platforms have helped raise awareness in ICH, but according to this study, questions of cultural authenticity and the way forward in digital preservation arise. The question is how these cultural idioms can be retained differently while at the same time making them relevant for the digital age, which sometimes may result in a negative transformation of the intended meaning of the content. Yao (2023) briefly presents several imperatives encountered in China, which are associated with the technology gap and dissimilarity in this context across the country. These constraints and imbalances in media access may thus inhibit the sharing of ICH in particular, especially in the country's countryside, which does not have access to the advanced tools. Yao (2023) supports the ideological approaches that aim to advance the technological framework to support ICH and increase formal education, which could enable better protects for ICH.

R. Liu and Qiu (2025) provide their ideas in this discourse by considering ideological presentations in the promotion of ICH through short-form video platforms. They identify that the government always tends to situate ICH within a nationalist paradigm that stresses the cultural belongingness of China with minimal regard to ICH as a multi-voiced phenomenon. These top-down strategies may go a long way in promoting an unpopular culture that may not appeal to other members of society, especially those from other cultures. Ma and Guo (2024) noted that the development of ICH resources could play a significant role in enhancing China's knowledge-based economy. Although the rationale for their research pertains to the economic utility of ICH, it understands that media technologies are instrumental in ICH and economic development. However, the commercialization of ICH, which is mainly accompanied by the use of digital media, as noted earlier in the research, can be misleading in the sense that it actually exploits ICH with the aim of making profits rather than conserving it.

Digital Media Influences Global Audience Reception and Engagement with Ich across Diverse Cultural Contexts, Using China's Heritage

The presentation of ICH has evolved over the years, especially with short video platforms like Douyin (TikTok), which affect people around the world's reception of cultures. According to H. Wang et al. (2024), the mode of short video sharing indicated by Douyin alternates the ways in which consumers engage with ICH by offering novel and easily consumable forms of traditional cultural content. At the same time, the work also raises concerns as to how cultural practices can be adequately narrowed down to easily viral content. Moreover, Cheng (2024) discusses how ordinary people contribute to China's ICH on TikTok with the protection and enactment of ICH. Cheng (2024) also concludes that, clearly, although social media, including TikTok, permits vast interaction with the cultural heritage, the meanings assigned and interpretations made by the public are influenced by the algorithms embedded in the social media platforms. This means some parts of ICH are highlighted only, usually the vulgar or the thrilling part; this may result in cultures being portrayed in a particular negative aspect as compared to reality. Overall, the digitization of ICH implies that people of the world rely on and engage with ICH, but there are also risks in terms of the depth of the interaction.

Li (2022) has depicted the application of grounded theory to examine the relationship between digitization and utilized media in regard to its impact on the living perpetuity of Handicraft ICH. Nevertheless, some aspects of such heritage remain absent in the digital media since they cannot be experienced as haptic knowledge that is involved in the handicraft culture. These limitations are very crucial in explaining the possibility of losing the culture and value of ICH when interacting with them digitally without considering their tangible mediums. He and Kosenko (2024) discuss the digital revolution, especially with regard to the digital media exhibition that helps in the promotion of ICH. They argued that, as compared to conventional modes of media, virtual museums and the use of interactive displays give the user a closer touch on cultural endowments. On the other hand, the authors also mentioned that these digital formats should be well-engrained in cultural considerations in order not to misinterpret the culture that is being represented.

Zihang and Yunfei (2025) focus on the effectiveness of using artificial intelligence in enhancing the digital communication strategy for ICH transmission using Yungang culture as the case study. This way, they note that AI can contribute towards the improvement of ICH for storytelling as it can allow content to be created and delivered based on the preferences of the client or user. They emphasize that over-dependency on these tools erodes the human aspect of culture and crucial information, hence reducing the levels of interaction with culture. Qing and Wang (2024) study the multimodal narrative discourse system for promoting Lingnan ICH and thus argue that the role of digital media should not only be considered visually oriented but also encompass multimedia with audio, text, and interactive parts. Although these contribute to the audience's interaction with ICH, they create the problem of managing the narrative flow and the accurate representation of culture in multiple media forms.

Theoretical Frameworks and Methodologies Used in Digital Media Strategies for Disseminating of Ich from Studies Related To China

The need to digitize ICH material in China has now led to the application of various theoretical and methodological approaches. C. Zhang, Tian, and Y. Zhang (2025) use grounded theory as a credible methodological approach to develop the model of performing digital ICH dissemination from the perspective of users. Yuan et al. (2024) employ a bibliometric approach to investigate the macro perspective of the ICH digitization research trends in China at large. Therefore, the usage of this approach allows us to see the meta-theoretical view on the intellectual structure of ICH digitization and to define new trends and issues for upcoming research, mainly the need for integration of interdisciplinary and cross-institutional collaborations.

Han et al. (2025) adopt a multi-theoretical framework including Gerbner's General Model of Communication and the Stimulus-Organism-Response model to propose a conceptual structure for audience engagement with ICH documentaries. This study integrates cognitive-affective-behavioral constructs to explain how viewing ICH-related content impacts cultural identity formation. Fan (2023) proposes a methodology that uses the semantic web and linked data along with the construction of an ontology to organize and interconnect ICH resources. This enables better and more detailed access to digitalized heritage information and knowledge, predicated on a more specific form of digitization than either text- or image-based information technologies. This idea also further develops the theoretical framework of ICH digital dissemination. It provides a new approach to the knowledge organization theory to connect cultural data with machine-interpretable structures.

M. Zhang (2024) provides a regional case study approach for the dissemination and revitalization of ICH concerning Liaoning in particular. It also points out the importance of content analysis in shifting the direction of initiating localized dissemination strategies that include both government guidance and the regular participation of the public. The results presented here indicate that the issues of cultural representation and, more so, cultural appropriateness in digital formats create the need for culturally appropriate narratives in the digital environment, and this calls for regional, culturally relevant narratives. X. Liu and Li (2024) discuss the significance of integrated media in a creative change of Zhuang cultural assets. It applies the cultural innovation perspective, where the authors explore how traditional media transform with the onset of digital convergence. Their research used document analysis and expert interviews; the growing tendency towards an interdisciplinary nature of ICH communication studies can explain the choice of the methods. Their work is relevant in explaining how integrated media can act as a bridge between an organization's preservation and modernization.

Literature Gap

Despite the increasing use of digital media in the dissemination of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in China, significant gaps remain in the existing literature. First, while studies have highlighted the use of grounded theory, bibliometric analysis, and multi-theoretical frameworks to understand ICH dissemination, there is still a lack of comprehensive research that integrates multiple digital platforms and their impact on cultural engagement (C. Zhang et al., 2025; Yuan, Tugiman, and Sharipudin, 2024). In addition, as technology is integrated into the methodological approach, for instance, artificial intelligence and linked data, the issues arising from cultural and

digital representation are slightly discussed (Zihang & Yunfei, 2025). Similarly, there is not much focus on the effects of digital convergence and multimodal approaches for sharing local cultures in preserving cultural heritage, especially for those in rural and ethnic areas (X. Liu & Li, 2024). It is necessary to explore how localized the concept of digital strategies adequately responds to the changing demands in a culturally sensitive society while also exploring the issue of the digital divide across the regions of China (Yao, 2023).

METHODOLOGY

Research Methods and Design

This study, therefore, employed a systematic literature review (SLR) as its research methodology to assess digital media for ICH communication. This paper will follow the SLR approach to systematically and comprehensively review the literature, categorize the findings and methods, and determine the theoretical frameworks that best explain them. Consequently, explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria were employed to obtain high-quality papers.

Data Collection

Searching Technique

The literature search for this study focused on identifying relevant articles based on themes aligned with the research objectives. Keywords were strategically chosen to capture the breadth of research related to digital media strategies, ICH, and China's role in the global dissemination of heritage. Some of the primary keywords used included: "digital media strategies," "intangible cultural heritage," "China," "digital preservation," "media literacy," "cultural heritage dissemination," and "globalization of ICH." These keywords helped to narrow the search results to studies directly relevant to the research topic.

Databases

Databases such as Web of Science, Google Scholar, JSTOR, and Scopus were used to gather relevant and quality literature. These databases were chosen because they offer a vast number of peer-reviewed articles, and coming from multi-disciplinary fields, it was important to find out how digital media strategies are used for the dissemination of ICH in China.

Boolean Operators

Boolean operators like AND, OR, and NOT were used to refine the search. For instance, the search string ("digital media" AND "intangible cultural heritage" AND "China") was applied to find relevant articles. The AND operator ensured all terms were included, while OR included synonyms, and NOT excluded irrelevant articles not aligned with the research objectives.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The search results were filtered based on specific inclusion and exclusion criteria. **Table 1** summarizes the criteria used for this process:

Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criterion	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Publications	Peer-reviewed articles, conference papers, and book chapters after 2017	Non-peer-reviewed sources (blogs, news articles, etc.) before 2017
Research Type	Empirical studies, theoretical papers, systematic reviews, and case studies	Opinion pieces, editorials, and articles without relevant data or findings
Language	English	Non-English papers (unless translated)
Focus	Studies related to ICH, digital media strategies, China, and global dissemination	Studies outside the scope of ICH or not related to digital media strategies

Selection of Papers through the PRISMA Framework

To ensure that all the articles were relevant to the study and aligned with the question being addressed, the authors employed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) approach to streamline the process. After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the authors found 80 articles to be the most relevant. These papers' abstracts and full texts were particularly reviewed and re-reviewed to ensure that

they fit the objectives of the present study. Therefore, 12 papers were chosen for review after the research to analyze the available literature (**Figure 1**). Purposive sampling ensured that only studies that focused on the key research questions were selected for the final review.

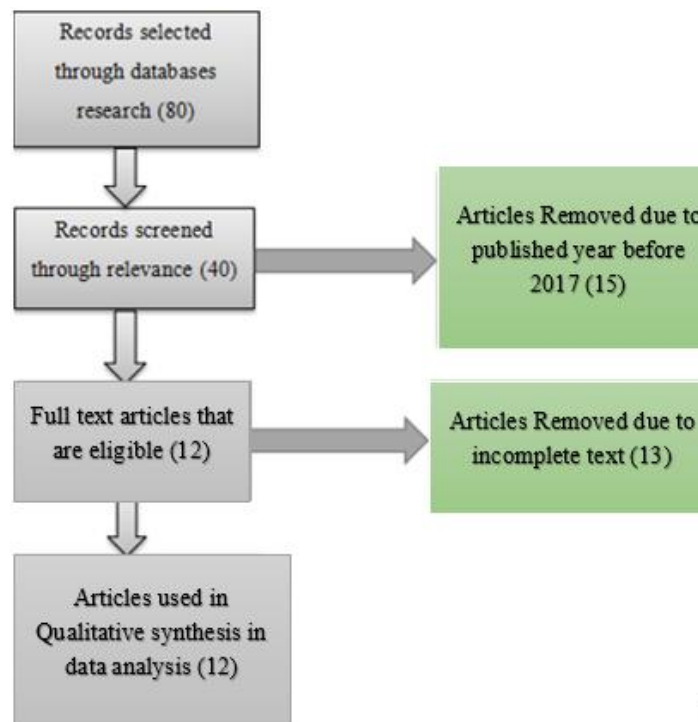


Figure 1. PRISMA Framework

Data Analysis Method

For data analysis, thematic analysis was employed to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within the literature. The process involved the following steps (**Table 2**).

Table 2. Data Analysis Methods

Step	Description
Familiarization	The researcher read and re-read the selected papers to become thoroughly familiar with the content and identify initial ideas for themes.
Coding	The researcher systematically coded sections of the literature, focusing on themes related to digital media strategies, ICH, and China's cultural dissemination.
Theme Development	The coded data were categorized into broader themes related to key findings from the literature, including challenges, strategies, and theoretical frameworks.
Reviewing Themes	Themes were reviewed and refined, ensuring that they accurately reflected the research questions and provided meaningful insights.
Reporting	The final themes were documented, and the results were analyzed to identify patterns, gaps, and emerging trends in the literature.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were followed by obtaining secondary data and relying on data and information from peer-reviewed articles only, including citations as a sign of integrity. The work that was reviewed was done objectively, and the results were reported clearly and concisely. The research was to be beneficial in contributing to the growth of knowledge in successful digital media communication; hence, there should be no false depiction of cultural values and traditions.

RESULTS

This section presents the data collected in this study systematically in tabular form, along with the implications of each research objective. **Table 3** below describes themes extracted for data analysis using NVivo Software to analyse the collected data.

Table 3. Theme Extraction

Theme	Description
Digital Media Strategies for ICH Dissemination	This theme focuses on analyzing how digital media strategies are employed for the global dissemination of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), specifically in the context of China. The strategies include social media, digital archives, and other online platforms used for promoting cultural heritage.
Audience Reception and Engagement	This theme explores how digital media influences the reception and engagement of global audiences with China's ICH and examines its role in how diverse cultural contexts interact with and understand cultural heritage.
Theoretical Frameworks and Methodologies	This theme involves examining the theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches used in the literature to analyze the digital media dissemination of ICH. This includes grounded theory, bibliometric approaches, and other research methodologies for studying digital media in ICH dissemination.
Cultural Representation and Authenticity	This theme analyzes the authenticity and representation of cultural heritage in digital formats, exploring how digital media both preserves and potentially distorts the original cultural meanings of ICH.
Globalization and Cultural Exchange	This theme examines the global dissemination of China's ICH and its role in intercultural communication and global cultural exchange. It focuses on how digital media facilitates the sharing of cultural practices across international borders.
Technological Tools and Innovation in ICH Preservation	This theme addresses the role of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and big data, in enhancing digital strategies for ICH preservation, focusing on their application in the Chinese context.

Theme 1: Digital Media Strategies for ICH Dissemination

Table 4 presents two studies on digital media strategies for ICH dissemination in the SLR analysis.

Table 4. Digital Media Strategies for ICH Dissemination

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Sun (2025)	To analyze the application of new media technologies in the preservation of Xinjiang Uyghur Muqam Art.	Case study: Qualitative research on using new media technologies for heritage preservation.	The study found that new media technologies such as digital archives, online platforms, and interactive media have been pivotal in preserving and expanding the reach of Xinjiang Uygur Muqam Art globally.	The study concludes that new media technologies are essential for the sustainable preservation of ICH, facilitating both cultural transmission and global engagement.
Qiu (2023)	To investigate the role of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in distinguishing cities through social media in Guangzhou.	Social media analysis; Content analysis of heritage-related social media posts.	The study found that social media platforms play a significant role in how Guangzhou's heritage is portrayed and perceived, enhancing the city's identity and global recognition.	The study concludes that social media has become a key tool in shaping urban identity through ICH, fostering a sense of place and belonging among locals and visitors.

Sun (2025) has focused on the effects of implementing new media technologies in promoting Xinjiang Uyghur Muqam Art; this paper discusses how digital databases and pages have supported worldwide appreciation and conservation of arts. Therefore, based on these considerations, these technologies are identified as essential in transmitting ICH. On the other hand, Qiu's (2023) work shows how social media has enabled the cultural branding of Guangzhou through place-mediating platforms that give 'Guangzhou' global visibility but circulate it primarily on the local level.

Theme 2: Audience Reception and Engagement

Table 5 presents studies on audience reception and engagement in digital media strategies for ICH dissemination.

Table 5. Audience Reception and Engagement

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Leow & Ch'ng (2021)	To analyze narrative engagement in immersive environments for cultural heritage learning.	Case study: Qualitative analysis of VR experience at a cultural heritage site in China.	The study found that audience engagement with cultural heritage is enhanced in immersive environments. Users showed increased emotional connection and deeper engagement through virtual journeys, particularly when narratives were personalized.	The study concludes that immersive digital environments, like VR, are powerful tools for enhancing audience engagement with intangible cultural heritage. Link
Yi (2023)	To explore how ICH practitioners negotiate digital platforms' influence on audience engagement.	Performance analysis of Douyin (TikTok) videos by a Chinese ICH inheritor.	The study found that Douyin videos serve as a dual role, combining national heritage promotion with interactive audience engagement. Audience reception varied across digital and official narratives, reflecting a negotiation of cultural identities.	The study concludes that Douyin's interactive format allows ICH practitioners to negotiate identity and promote ICH through engaged participation in digital spaces. Link

In this study, Leow and Ch'ng (2021) established earlier that audiences demonstrate a higher emotional connection to cultural heritage through immersive VR environments. Yi (2023) investigated how ICH practitioners maintain the balance between the promotional work of ICH at the national level and active viewers, and this paper unveiled that digital narratives embrace a dynamic cultural identity. Both studies underline that the introduction of new media, specifically technology, has intensified interaction with the audience.

Theme 3: Theoretical Frameworks and Methodologies

Table 6 presents two studies focused on theoretical frameworks and methodologies for the digital dissemination of ICH.

Table 6. Theoretical Frameworks and Methodologies

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Zhang, Tian, and Zhang (2025)	To build a model for the digital dissemination of intangible cultural heritage through grounded theory.	Grounded theory; NVivo12 software for qualitative analysis.	The study identifies user willingness, technical support, and cultural plasticity as key factors affecting the digital dissemination of ICH. Based on these findings, a model for effective dissemination is proposed.	The study concludes that grounded theory is effective for understanding the challenges and solutions in the digital dissemination of ICH.
Yuan, Tugiman, and Sharipudin (2024)	To analyze the bibliometric trends in intangible cultural heritage digitization research in China.	Bibliometric analysis using CiteSpace to analyze publications from 2006 to 2023.	The study reveals three developmental phases in ICH digitization: early preservation, rapid expansion, and integration of new media and big data. It highlights the shift toward more interdisciplinary research in the field.	The study concludes that bibliometric analysis reveals the evolution of ICH digitization and emphasizes the need for cross-institutional collaboration.

In a study conducted by Zhang, Tian, and Zhang (2025) based on the grounded theory and use of NVivo12, the authors developed a model for ICH dissemination. They suggested the appropriate factors to consider while implementing the model, such as the willingness of the users and the level of technical support available. In their

work, Yuan, Tugiman, and Sharipudin (2024) analyze the history of the development of digitization in ICH to show the three phases and the shift to multidisciplinary studies. Both studies also stress the role of theory and partnership in developing ICH dissemination.

Theme 4: Cultural Representation and Authenticity

Table 7 presents two studies on cultural representation and authenticity in intangible cultural heritage.

Table 7. Cultural Representation and Authenticity

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
J.Su (2021)	To explore the integration of authenticity in Yunnan's ICH, focusing on local practices and global expectations.	Historical and critical heritage discourse; Qualitative analysis of Yunnan ICH.	The study examines tensions between local cultural practices and global ideas of authenticity. It highlights the difficulty of maintaining cultural purity in the face of global commercialization and external pressures.	The study concludes that authenticity in ICH requires careful negotiation between local traditions and global expectations, making it a dynamic and evolving concept.
Ma (2025)	To analyze Anhui's ICH's mediatized shaping and craftsmanship's creative transformation.	Case study of Anhui ICH through media analysis and interviews with craftsmen.	The study explores how media platforms shape the representation of Anhui's craftsmanship. It reveals how media technologies have influenced the creative transformation of traditional crafts, leading to a redefined cultural memory.	The study concludes that mediatized shaping of ICH through creative transformation can help preserve and innovate traditional crafts, but risks cultural distortion if not managed ethically.

J. Su (2021) explores how authenticity in Yunnan's ICH is influenced by the tension between local traditions and global expectations, highlighting the challenge of maintaining cultural purity amid global commercialization. Ma (2025) analyzes how media platforms reshape the representation of Anhui's craftsmanship, showing that media technologies drive creative transformation but may risk cultural distortion if not carefully managed. Both studies emphasize the delicate balance between preservation and modernization.

Theme 5: Globalization and Cultural Exchange

Table 8 presents two studies on globalization and cultural exchange in the context of China's intangible cultural heritage (ICH).

Table 8. Globalization and Cultural Exchange

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Xiang (2022)	To examine the globalization context and international contributions of China's intangible cultural heritage (ICH) protection.	Literature review; Case studies of Chinese ICH in global contexts.	The study identifies that China's ICH protection efforts have been crucial in global cultural exchange. It emphasizes the impact of ICH on international relations and its potential to enhance global cultural dialogue.	The study concludes that China's ICH protection is pivotal to fostering global intercultural communication and strengthening China's cultural diplomacy.
J. Zhang and Jing (2022)	To analyze the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in the cross-cultural communication of intangible cultural heritage.	Case study on using AI in ICH promotion and qualitative interviews with stakeholders.	The study reveals that AI technologies significantly enhance ICH's cross-cultural communication, making cultural content more interactive, engaging, and accessible to global audiences.	The study concludes that AI-driven digital platforms effectively disseminate ICH, fostering cultural exchange and deeper engagement with global audiences.

Xiang (2022) reflects upon Chinese ICH protection's work in disseminating international cultural exchanges,

finding that Chinese protection of ICH enhances inter- and intrapersonal communication in cultural diplomacy. An article by J. Zhang and Jing (2022) demonstrates that AI increases cultural interaction in disseminating ICH and access to ICH for other users. Hence, both studies point to the fact that digital media enhances the flow of culture.

Theme 6: Technological Tools and Innovation in ICH Preservation

Table 9 presents two studies on technological tools and innovation in ICH preservation.

Table 9. Technological Tools and Innovation in ICH Preservation

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Pang et al. (2024)	To explore the application of digital exhibition and preservation of intangible cultural heritage using holographic real-time cloud broadcasting.	Case study: Holographic cloud broadcasting for ICH exhibition.	The study demonstrates how holographic real-time broadcasting can bring interactive, immersive experiences to digital ICH exhibitions, making cultural heritage more accessible and engaging to a global audience.	The study concludes that holographic technology is a promising tool for digitally preserving and disseminating ICH, offering a cutting-edge approach to engaging global audiences.
Yan and Tong (2024)	To examine how artificial intelligence (AI) can facilitate the inheritance and protection of intangible cultural heritage.	Case study of Yanjing's ICH using AI and digital archiving.	The study highlights the use of AI technologies, including virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), to enhance the interactivity and engagement of ICH. It also emphasizes the role of big data for precise cultural dissemination.	The study concludes that AI-driven technologies, such as VR and AR, offer innovative solutions for protecting and disseminating ICH, improving global engagement.

Pang et al. (2024) observe that viewers respond positively to holography and, therefore, advocate for using holographic real-time cloud broadcasting to preserve and showcase digital ICH exhibitions. In their paper, Yan and Tong (2024) examine the use of AI, VR, and AR for preserving and promoting Yanjing ICH and the benefits of such applications in creating a global reach for ICH.

DISCUSSION

Interpretation of the Findings

The research objectives outlined in this study focus on identifying and analyzing digital media strategies used in the global dissemination of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), particularly in the context of China. The study explores how digital media influences global audience reception and engagement with China's ICH and the theoretical frameworks and methodologies applied to the digital dissemination of ICH.

The first objective, which includes identifying the strategies for disseminating ICH through digital media, has been found relevant in the literature. Researchers like Sun (2025) and Qiu (2023) stress how social and interactive means, such as social media, promote ICH beyond borders. These platforms preserve the ICH and bring it out to the world, thus increasing exposure to different cultural events such as dances, singing, and even arts and crafts.

The second objective of the analysis concerning how digital media influences the audience and their reception in global contexts has been addressed by studies like Leow & Ch' ng (2021) and Yi (2023). This indicates that engaging approaches like VR and other interactive tools like TikTok can help enhance ICH's emotional connections and engagement. However, concerns are raised, such as misrepresentation of culture and distortion of culture, so these platforms are well-advised to ensure that culture is not trivialized.

The third objective, focusing on theoretical frameworks and methodologies for digital ICH dissemination, is supported by the researchers C. Zhang et al. (2025) and Yuan et al. (2024). This paper uses the social research methodology of analyzing literature and the Grounded theory visits to learn more about challenges and trends regarding digitizing ICH and the assertion that interdisciplinary studies are crucial for spreading ICH in the era of digital humanities.

Comparison with the Previous Studies

This paper establishes the role and significance of new media technologies in documenting China's intangible cultural heritage. Kim et al. (2019) examined the role of digital technologies in the sustainability of ICH in Korea. So, this study establishes the use of social media to enhance cultural heritage preservation worldwide. Kim et al. (2019) emphasize that virtual environments and digital platforms enhance accessibility and engagement, which corresponds to this research by Sun (2025) regarding the use of digital collections and multimedia in the promotion of Xinjiang Uyghur Muqam Art.

Moreover, the study reveals that social media is vital for ICH's communication, aligning with Qiu (2023), who investigated the role of social media in remaking Guangzhou's heritage and city image. In the same way, social media also helps protect and promote ICH, in which cultural mapping is employed in the documentation and dissemination of ICH worldwide, as stated by Besmonte (2022). This aligns with this study's findings that digital media aids in the exchange of culture both locally and internationally, as well as in increasing the awareness of ICH.

This study points out the use of social media in promoting ICH to an audience where VR and/or AR are highly emphasized. This aligns with the arguments highlighted by Leow and Ch'ng (2021), who described how digital technologies, specifically those extending to immersive environments such as VR, positively impact audience engagement and give them an emotive connection with the culture. However, Yi (2023) makes a broader argument, analyzing how ICH practitioners use Douyin (TikTok) videos to express a negotiation of cultural identity. This can be aligned with this study's findings of how the use of digital media in representing and transmitting ICH implies interaction with international and domestic discourse.

Among them are AI, VR, and big data, which the study offers as tools to enhance preservation and dissemination. This can be supported by the study done by Bi and Nasir (2024) on the use of interactive technologies in the preservation of ICH. The study equally underlines how interactive application improves interaction and boost culture promotion. Zhao (2024) also touches on image processing algorithms in ICH protection, hence supporting the general developments in the technological tools that can be used to protect, promote, and sustainably utilize ICH. Similarly, E. Liu et al. (2020) explore how CNN technology can aid in the inheritance of craftsmanship through online communities. This study supports the findings of the current research, where digital platforms and advanced technologies provide new means of preserving and sharing traditional crafts.

The results related to authenticity in ICH dissemination are consistent with the notion presented by J. Su (2021) that concerns the challenges of preserving authenticity, especially in today's world of commercialization and media exposure. This study found that digital media platforms can distort the local authenticity of ICH when cultures are re-contextualized for global audiences. This is evidenced in Ma (2025), who discusses the creativity in media technologies about traditional craft, where a case of inadequacy in the process results in a culturally perverted nature. On the other hand, as Liang (2019) identifies, ethnic minorities in China can regulate the portrayal of their culture in media platforms. This research proves that culture integration demands knowledge of digital media literacy to produce a place for authentic representation.

The study also aligns with Xiang (2022), especially on the role of digital media in cultural diplomacy and cross-cultural communication. In this article, Xiang (2022) examines how protecting and identifying ICH in China helps enrich the global exchange of culture. This parallels the observation in this research on cultural circulation in the digital landscape. In addition, J. Zhang & Jing (2022) look into how AI technologies can benefit cross-cultural communication and echo the study's finding that AI-based platforms contribute to the improved interaction and sharing of ICH across cultures.

Theoretical Implications

This study provides a theoretical understanding of the relationship between digital media strategies and China's global promotion of ICH. The analysis also examines the influence of the digital age interfaces and their influence by presenting virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and social media towards cultural culture and preservation. These findings support the argument of Y. Zhang et al. (2024) about the need for technological tools to disseminate ICH. One of the primary theoretical considerations is the analysis of the concept of culture that is captured via digital technology. This work supports Lai and Bai (2021), who argue that repurposing may cause shifts in the meanings of ICH in the promotion and distribution process in the context of global online platforms. Also, the study adds to the existing literature discussing cultural identity negotiation in the digital arena, as noted by Yi (2023). These platforms allow practitioners to reach out to people. At the same time, it controls the cultural discourses that they articulate on the importation, repatriation, context, uses, and ownership of ICH, which is

changing the face of ICH globally. Moreover, applying the grounded theory and bibliometric research methodology yields a strong approach to mapping ICH digitalization. The study is grounded on cultural and media contact theories and contributes to understanding how Information and Communication Technology enhances ICH preservation.

CONCLUSION

This paper aims to determine how much digital media is instrumental in promoting Global ICH, with special reference to China. It shows how social media, VR, and AI enhance ICH's communication with the international community, but also embrace the issues of cultural authenticity and the risk of commercialization. The findings underscore strategies to balance communicating cultures to other people and maintaining their essence as intended by the actual cultural meaning.

Limitations of the Study

A notable limitation of this research study is that it uses secondary data collected from the current published literature, which might not reflect the current trends in using Digital media to promote ICH. Also, this research is more exclusive to China, which may hamper its generalization to other parts of the world with different digital media cultures and preferences. In the current study, access to the internet and the availability of electronic devices also affect the overall generalization of the findings, especially between the urban and rural sectors.

Future Work

Future works also explore the long-term influences of the digital media initiative on ICH access and exchange. Furthermore, research could be conducted on how new technologies, such as virtual and augmented reality, impact global realism. Studying the compatibility between culture and presented media sources would contribute to identifying the regional features that are more suitable for expanding ICH protection.

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