

Cultural Heritage Conservation of Guild Hall Building in Southern Shaanxi, China

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ABSTRACT

The aims of this research are (i) to explore the value of integrating Guild Hall Building Culture in Southern Shaanxi into local university and (ii) to determine the strategies for integrating Guild Hall Building Culture in Southern Shaanxi into local university. This research is a qualitative study that uses tools such as document analysis, interviews, surveys, and focus group discussions to collect research data. From the perspective of cultural heritage conservation and cultural literacy education, the interaction and internal logic between the conservation of Guild Hall Building heritage and its inheritance in college education are analyzed. The value and strategy of integrating the Guild Hall Building's architectural culture into the local colleges and universities will be explored in order to promote the dynamic, diversified conservation and inheritance of the Guild Hall Building's architectural culture. The results of the study are presented in the form of a descriptive analysis. The results of the study show that Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi have rich cultural connotations and educational value. Integrating Guild Hall Building culture into college literacy education is an important way to protect and pass on architectural cultural heritage. It is not only an important and effective way to improve students' cultural literacy and critical thinking, but also to strengthen students' cultural identity and social responsibility. This study highlights the important role of education in heritage conservation by exploring the key issues intertwined between the conservation of Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi and literacy education. Additionally it lays a foundation for further research and practical application in the fields of heritage conservation and literacy education, and provides new insights and ideas for promoting long-term public participation in heritage conservation.

Key words: Cultural Heritage Conservation, Literacy Education, Guild Hall Building In Southern Shaanxi, Cultural Identity

INTRODUCTION

Among China's rich architectural cultural heritage, the Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi are a unique architectural type formed since the Ming and Qing dynasties (Li, 2016; Chen, 2018). They vividly and succinctly reveal local wisdom and cultural patterns, and not only have very high artistic value and rich cultural connotation, but are also a valuable resource for improving students' cultural literacy (Wang & Yuan, 2018). However, with the social changes, many Guild Hall Buildings with research value in southern Shaanxi have been destroyed, demolished or converted to other uses, and the existing number is gradually decreasing. Therefore, it is very urgent and necessary to establish effective strategies and methods to protect this important cultural resource (Jiang & Dian, 2007; Chen, 2018).

Of the available studies, some have explored the conservation and use strategies of Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi Province, but they mainly focus on static conservation strategies, such as the maintenance of the building

itself, the transformation of spatial functions, the development of tourism resources, and the establishment of sound conservation mechanisms (Huang, 2015; Li, 2017; Chen, 2018). However, the importance of literacy education in the conservation of the architectural cultural heritage of Guild Hall Buildings has been overlooked. Peng Zhaorong et al. (2023) highlighted that "Education" is the core function of cultural heritage interpretation. The preservation and transmission of cultural heritage requires multiple interpretations of cultural heritage from different perspectives and using different methods (Peng et al., 2023). Bruner (1996) and Dewey (1916) emphasized that education serves as a means of transmitting cultural values and knowledge to younger generations, enabling them to appreciate and protect cultural artefacts (Sulima, 2022; Uswatun, 2020). Education can raise people's awareness of heritage conservation and encourage their active participation in heritage conservation (Sulima, 2022). Literacy education plays a pivotal role in the transmission and preservation of cultural

heritage (Goodarzarparvari & Camejo, 2018; Ztemiz, 2020; Peng & Sirisuk, 2024).

Although existing research suggests that cultural literacy education is increasingly recognized as essential for fostering understanding and appreciation of diverse cultural backgrounds (Causarano, 2016), and can enhance audiences' cultural identity and sense of responsibility, there is a lack of research on how these effects are transferred to the next generation (Zhang, R.F., 2021). This study aims to fill the gap in existing research by exploring how cultural literacy education can enhance students' awareness and sense of responsibility for the conservation of architectural cultural heritage, such as the Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi Province, and provide new perspectives for the conservation of this type of architectural cultural heritage.

The core argument of this paper is that the theory of cultural literacy education can be effectively applied to the field of heritage conservation and broader cultural policy. Existing literature studies have successfully demonstrated that Cultural Literacy Education can enhance students' cultural literacy and cultural identity, thereby promoting the protection and legacy of cultural heritage (Ztemiz, 2020; Prinsloo & Krause-Alzaidi, 2023). Therefore, this study departs from the theoretical framework of cultural heritage protection to investigate the educational value and strategies of integrating the architectural cultural heritage of the Guild Hall Buildings in Southern Shaanxi into the cultural literacy education of a local university, in order to enhance students' cultural literacy and critical thinking, strengthen students' sense of identity and social responsibility towards the architectural cultural heritage, and enable them to continue to use and appreciate it for future generations.

This study uses a qualitative research method. A comprehensive review of existing research on the conservation of Guild Hall Buildings and related educational initiatives was undertaken through a document analysis. Qualitative data was collected through interviews with academics, teachers and students involved in heritage conservation research. Fieldwork was conducted utilizing survey instruments to analyze the potential value of incorporating Guild Hall Buildings in Southern Shaanxi into an educational program. In addition, focus group discussions were used to analyze the feasibility of the strategy and participants' perceptions and attitudes to demonstrate the adaptability of the theory in different heritage contexts. The research findings show that: (1) Cultural education through schooling has improved students' cultural literacy and critical thinking. By studying the Guild Hall Buildings from multiple disciplinary perspectives, students have gained a broader understanding of the historical and cultural significance of the Guild Hall Buildings. (2) Field trips and experiential learning cultivated students' cultural identity and social responsibility. Students expressed that learning about the historical background and cultural significance of these buildings has strengthened their sense of identity with the local culture. (3) Cultural Literacy Education has inspired students' sense of responsibility for the preservation of cultural heritage. Students became more aware of the importance of preserving historic

buildings and expressed a willingness to participate in heritage conservation.

This study fills a research gap in the application of Cultural Literacy Education in architectural heritage conservation. By integrating heritage conservation with the practice of cultural literacy education, it highlights the role of enhancing cultural literacy in strengthening cultural identity and social responsibility. These findings not only enrich the theoretical framework of heritage conservation, but also provide new insights and ideas for promoting long-term public participation in heritage conservation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review combed the results of related research on the preservation of the Guild Hall Building's architectural heritage and cultural education.

Research on Guild Hall Buildings in Southern Shaanxi

There is no clear definition of the concept of "Guild Hall Building" in academia, but scholars have elaborated and understood it based on different research directions. He Bingdi defines it as "an organization and building established by people from the same hometown in a foreign country" (He, 1996). Lu Zuoshe sees "Guild Hall" as "a social structure and social organization" (Lv, 1984). Wang Rigen, as one of the most authoritative experts and scholars in the field of Chinese guildhall architecture, proposed in his book "History of Chinese Guildhalls" that "a guildhall is a social organization established by people from a different hometown in a foreign land or elsewhere during the Ming and Qing dynasties. It arose in response to social changes and constantly changed its form. While effectively integrating internally, it also constantly seeks integration with the outside world" (Wang, 2007). In general, through the interpretation of the concept of guildhall architecture by various experts and scholars, "guildhall architecture" refers to the architecture that provides a place for activities for the social organization of guilds. It is a type of architecture that arose along with this social organization. It belongs to the type of public architecture, and its functions are also diverse. Its functions are not singular, and it is very comprehensive and inclusive (Dai, 2020).

In recent years, there has been a positive trend in the research of Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi, and related discussions have been quite active. Jiang Xiaojun and Bian Jianning (2007) explained the unique regional characteristics and cultural value of Guild Hall Buildings in Southern Shaanxi based on the analysis of field research. Jiang Xiaojun (2008) studied the distribution characteristics, form and layout, functional characteristics, and cultural value of Guild Halls in southern Shaanxi from the perspective of historical geography. Huang Qiong (2015) analyzed the conservation elements of Guild Hall Buildings in Ankang, southern Shaanxi, and the current problems of Guild Hall Buildings conservation, and proposed recommendations for the conservation of the buildings themselves, the management of the surrounding environment, the construction of a

regulatory system for conservation, and the strengthening of government supervision and protection. Li Zhenyu (2017) proposed functional and spatial transformation and rational planning for the future development of Guild Halls in southern Shaanxi, so that Guild Hall Buildings can be integrated into the urban space. Chen Huayang (2018) proposed integrating and replanning the space around Guild Hall Buildings, trying to restore and protect some of the original scenes, restoring the original functions, establishing relevant academic research bases, establishing thematic museums, and carrying out cultural heritage protection and tourism resource protection. Some scholars have also studied individual buildings, analyzing the decorative arts, construction techniques, and artistic value of Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi (Zhao, 2018; Yuan, 2018). Although relevant scholars have studied Guild Hall Buildings in Southern Shaanxi from different perspectives, they have overlooked the importance of the concept of literacy education in architectural heritage conservation.

Research on Architectural Heritage Conservation

Architectural heritage refers to tangible, immovable cultural heritage with certain elements of value. It includes not only historical buildings and building complexes, but also urban or rural environments that can collectively reflect a specific culture or historical event, such as historical streets and cultural and historical landscape areas (Qing, 2013). Architectural cultural heritage should be handed down to future generations in its original state and in as many varieties as possible. Otherwise, the continuity of human consciousness itself will be destroyed (Zhang, 2007). From the first International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments held in Athens in 1931 to the present day, the scope of architectural cultural heritage conservation has evolved from individual to group, from simple architectural styles to rich functional connotations and cultural heritage. This evolution is also a process of emphasizing the conservation of cultural heritage to the transmission of its value (Li, 2015). Jokilehto Jukka, an expert in the international architectural heritage conservation community, said: "The main issue in modern heritage conservation is value, and the concept of value itself has undergone a number of changes" (Jokilehto, 2011). Roger Scruton in "Aesthetics of Architecture" clearly pointed out that "in architecture, function is not the only essential feature of a building" (Roger, 2010). This statement also confirms the importance of cultural value in architecture.

The Role of Cultural Literacy Education in Cultural Heritage Conservation

Cultural Literacy Education refers to the process of cultivating cultural awareness, respect for diversity, and intercultural communication skills through educational means that enable learners to gain an in-depth understanding and awareness of a specific cultural and historical context. Emphasis is placed on enhancing students' cultural identity and social responsibility through the study of cultural

knowledge (Djafar & Djafri, 2024; Rahman & Abdulkarim, 2024). Cultural literacy education enhances understanding and appreciation of architectural heritage, fostering public engagement and support for preservation efforts through informed interpretation of historical significance and context (Cutler, 2000). Integrating cultural literacy education into architectural heritage preservation can lead to a more specific knowledge of heritage and a greater awareness of identity and values (López-Fernández et al., 2021). Integrated cultural literacy education into architectural heritage preservation can help promote the importance of cultural heritage and its contribution to sustainable development (Elyasi & Yamacli, 2023).

The Role of Schooling in Cultural Transmission

Education is an endless process of learning, especially in schools, colleges, and universities; it is a continuous process that assists in the acquisition of knowledge, ideas, values, skills, beliefs, theories, and habits (Dewey, 2008). Schools are an important way to transmit traditional culture. The professionalism, systematic nature, and integrity of school education make schools an important place for cultural inheritance. Integrating traditional architectural culture into colleges and universities can edify, educate and stimulate students, while bringing cultural air with rich history (Wu & Shan, 2006). Universities play a crucial role in promoting interdisciplinary competence and new educational programs to train cultural heritage experts, contributing to their future in a globalized world (Biehl, 2013).

The literature review analyzed the Guild Hall Building in Southern Shaanxi, the research results related to architectural cultural heritage conservation; analyzed the important role of cultural literacy education and higher education in cultural heritage conservation, the existing research laid the theoretical foundation for this study. Integrating the Guild Hall Building in Southern Shaanxi Culture into cultural literacy education in local colleges and universities is conducive to promoting the long-term conservation of historic buildings, and is also an important way to promote cultural inheritance and innovation.

Rnderpinning Theories and Theoretical Framework

Cultural Heritage Conservation

"Cultural Heritage Conservation" refers to various measures and methods to ensure that cultural heritage is preserved, maintained, restored and passed on so that it can continue to be used and appreciated by future generations. Cultural heritage includes two major categories: tangible cultural heritage and intangible cultural heritage (Skounti, 2023; Makhloufi, 2024). Cultural heritage is an important record of human history. Its preservation helps to preserve the historical memory of mankind. It is also an important carrier of national culture. Its preservation and promotion contribute to the transmission and development of national culture. Through the protection and exhibition of cultural heritage, the public's understanding and respect for different cultures and

historical backgrounds can be promoted, and the sense of national identity and pride can be strengthened (Jing, 2022).

Cultural literacy education

“Cultural Literacy Education” refers to the process of cultivating cultural awareness, respect for diversity, and intercultural communication skills through educational means so that learners can gain an in-depth understanding and awareness of a specific cultural and historical context. This type of education focuses not only on improving language and literacy skills, but also on enhancing students’ sense of cultural identity and social responsibility through learning cultural knowledge (Djafar & Djafri, 2024; Rahman & Abdulkarim, 2024). It can help students understand and appreciate the history, traditions, values, and customs of different cultures. Cultivate students’ intercultural communication and cooperation skills so that they can interact effectively in a multicultural environment. Encourage students to think critically about cultural phenomena and to understand the social and historical reasons for cultural differences. To stimulate students’ interest in and love for their local culture and to promote the preservation and development of traditional culture. Encourage students’ active participation in community cultural activities, fostering their sense of social responsibility and citizenship (Cutler, 2000; Elyasi & Yamacli, 2023).

Research Questions

This study focuses on the following issues:

1. What is the educational value of Guild Hall Buildings in Southern Shaanxi, and does it help improve students’ cultural literacy and comprehensive practical skills?
2. How can the Guild Hall Building culture in Southern Shaanxi be effectively integrated into university cultural education to enhance students’ cultural identity and sense of social responsibility?

METHOD

Population and Sample

Guild Hall Building is not only an architectural entity, but also a carrier of cultural dissemination, which contains rich educational value. This study focuses on exploring the educational value of guild hall buildings in southern Shaanxi, and strategies for their effective integration into cultural literacy education in colleges and universities. Therefore, purposive sampling was used to select three different groups of individuals as interviewees for the field research; these groups include key informants, casual informants, and general informants. The extracted population samples shown in Table 1.

Selection of Research Site

The southern province of Shaanxi consists of three administrative regions: Hanzhong City, Ankang City, and Shangluo City. The Guild Hall Buildings in Hanzhong City have

basically disappeared. Therefore, this study selected Ziyang District and Xunyang District in Ankang City, and Danfeng District and Shanyang District in Shangluo City as the research sites and takes the existing 22 Guild Hall Buildings as the research subjects to carry out the research work.

Research Tools

This study is based on qualitative methodology and uses document analysis, interviews, surveys, focus group discussion research tools to work on the research objectives. Each tool has its own unique purpose and is used to explore the Guild Hall Building Culture in Southern Shaanxi’s integration into local universities’ cultural literacy education value and strategies, as shown in Table 2.

Data Analysis

Inductive analysis and typological analysis were used to analyze the data using the qualitative research approach. The descriptive analysis approach was used to analyze the data. The results were reported in the order of the research objectives, in the form of tables and figures.

After collecting the field data, the researcher organized the material into content groupings. The researchers’ triangulation approach was then used to verify the accuracy of the classified information. The classified version of the material was given to the three groups of informants who were asked for their thoughts on the veracity of the summary data. The degree of agreement among the three groups of informants, according to this This method determines the reliability of the information.

The information collected was analyzed using qualitative research methods. Induction analysis and typological analysis were the qualitative data analysis methods used in this used in this approach. These are the two techniques. The results of the data analysis were presented by the in accordance with the research objectives by the researcher.

RESULTS

The Value of Integrating Guild Hall Building Culture in Southern Shaanxi into Local University Cultural Literacy Education

The Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi are not only witnesses of history, but also bearers of a great cultural fusion. This diverse cultural carrier has formed a rich educational value, which plays an imperceptible educational role in the spiritual world of modern people. Specifically, the educational value of the Guild Hall Building culture in southern Shaanxi is mainly reflected in the historical educational value, the aesthetic educational value and the moral educational value.

Historical educational value

John Ruskin once said, “Without architecture we would lose our memory” (John, 2012). Architecture leaves behind not

Table 1. Population and sample

Category	Description	Quantity
Key Informants	Cultural Heritage Conservation Specialists, scholars studying Guild Hall Buildings, experts in the field of education, government officials from the management units of Guild Hall Buildings	8
Casual Informants	Managers and craftsmen responsible for the daily maintenance of Guild Hall Buildings, tourism managers, university professors	12
General Informants	University students, villagers, volunteers, and tourists	15

Table 2. Research tools and steps

Research Tools	Description
Document analysis	This study uses document analysis as a basic research tool to collect and analyze literature related to Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi. This includes government documents, related works, academic papers, and local county chronicles. The main focus of this phase of the work is to collect research literature from domestic and foreign scholars and analyze the historical development and educational value of Guild Hall Buildings in Southern Shaanxi.
Interviews	Special interview guidelines were designed for various interviewees, including Cultural Heritage Conservation Specialists, scholars studying Guild Hall Buildings, experts in the field of education, government officials from the management units of Guild Hall Buildings, managers and craftsmen responsible for the daily maintenance of the Guild Hall Buildings, tourism managers, university professors, university students, villagers, volunteers, and tourists, etc. Through targeted interviews, the origins, historical development, current state of conservation, educational value, and means of disseminating literacy education of the Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi were determined.
survey	The survey mainly includes field surveys and participatory observation. Direct observation was used in the research process to collect image data of the guildhall buildings. Participate in tours and folklore events related to the Guild Hall Building and record information.
Focus-Group Discussion	Focus group discussion topics were developed for the strategy of integrating Guild Hall Building culture in southern Shaanxi into university literacy education. Participants in these discussions included heritage conservation specialists, scholars studying Guild Hall Buildings, experts in the field of education, government officials from Guild Hall Building management units, and university professors, and the discussions were recorded and thoroughly analyzed and summarized.

only a usable physical space, but also a rich historical space. A study of the background and development history of Guild Hall Building in southern Shaanxi found that it was a type of architecture born out of social changes and economic development during the Ming and Qing dynasties. It witnessed the scenes of people's movement due to war, famine, and political factors during the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the economic prosperity brought about by the improvement of transportation technology, and the social organization structure and lifestyle in Southern Shaanxi during the Ming and Qing Dynasties (Chen, 2018). It has undeniable historical and educational value, and is a vivid historical picture book teaching material for architectural literacy education.

Another discovery is that the rise and fall of the Guild Hall Building is almost synchronous with the socio-economic development of southern Shaanxi during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. The emergence, prosperity, transformation and disappearance of Guild Halls reflect the entire process of the social and economic development of southern Shaanxi from the Ming and Qing dynasties to its gradual decline. It is a factual record of the social changes in southern Shaanxi over the centuries. It is this process of historical change that gives the Guild Hall Buildings in Southern Shaanxi their unique historical and educational value. They are an important teaching tool for understanding the local history, economic history, and migration history of Southern Shaanxi

during the Ming and Qing dynasties (Huang, 2015; Zhang, 2010). In the interviews, an education expert said: Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi can visually represent and display the years it has experienced through its physical form, perpetuating our memory of history and helping students understand the stories that happened here and the connection between the current society and the past. Students can experience historical changes and cultural heritage more intuitively, which will stimulate their interest in learning about history and improve their knowledge and understanding of it.

Aesthetic education value

Rational analysis and research on the aesthetic value of cultural relics is of great theoretical and practical significance for fully understanding and giving full play to the aesthetic and educational value of cultural relics (Zhang & Chen, 2008). Field research and participant observation have revealed that the primary aesthetic and educational value of the Guild Hall Buildings or architectural complexes that remain in southern Shaanxi today is the architectural style that incorporates elements of both northern and southern Chinese architecture. The result is a style that combines the boldness and grandeur of northern architecture with the elegance and beauty of southern architecture (Figure 1). The

use of southern architectural features such as “horsehead gables” and “courtyards” reflects the integration of northern and southern architectural cultures (Huang, 2015; Chen, 2018). These diverse architectural forms and styles provide rich examples for aesthetic education. Through participatory observation, people can understand how the characteristics of different regional cultures are expressed in architectural design, thereby cultivating cross-cultural aesthetic ability. In the interviews, a government official from the management units of Guild Hall Buildings said. The Guild Hall Building in southern Shaanxi is also very distinctive in terms of decorative arts, with extensive use of wood carving, brick carving and painting techniques. Traditional Chinese philosophy, business concepts, folk tales, historical legends, etc. are incorporated into the ridge, eaves, door frames, and partition walls of the Guild Hall Building through various decorative details. These decorative techniques are exquisite and elegant, demonstrating a high level of craftsmanship. These carvings are not only ornamental, but also reflect the creative principles and aesthetic concepts of the unique architectural decorative art of the Qing Dynasty. In addition, the detailed decorations of Guild Hall Buildings, such as doors and windows, column bases, and brackets, also reflect craftsmanship and the pursuit of beauty.

The educational value of the Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi lies not only in the artistic beauty of the building itself, but also in the profound cultural heritage and aesthetic concepts behind it, which can cultivate students' sensitivity to beauty and enhance their aesthetic appreciation. This in turn will promote aesthetic interests and strengthen cultural identity.

Moral education value

From the perspective of the origin and development of human architectural civilization, architecture embodies man's moral cognition, moral emotions, moral beliefs, moral will and moral ideals, carries forward man's historical and cultural memory, moral and cultural traditions and ethical and cultural matrix, and embodies man's pursuit of the value of the good and his longing for the value of a better life. The Guild Halls in southern Shaanxi were originally formed on the basis of “hometown ties” among the Hakka people, and the Guild Hall Building was built to provide a place for them to remember their hometown and reunite with their hometown friends. The design, decoration, and functional layout

of the Guild Hall Building reflect the builders' admiration for traditional virtues such as integrity, kindness, diligence, and frugality. This is consistent with the core socialist values of patriotism, dedication, integrity, and kindness that we are currently advocating (Chen, 2018). During the field research, it was discovered that the 200 square meters of colorful murals preserved in the Beiwuhui Guild Hall in Wafangdian, Xiangyang Town, Ziyang County, Ankang City, southern Shaanxi Province, are the largest murals in Shaanxi Province. The contents are mainly stories of the Three Kingdoms and ancient Chinese stories of filial piety and chastity. These murals not only serve as decoration, but also fulfill the task of “educating people and helping them understand the right way to behave. They have an important educational value in enhancing students' understanding of traditional virtues such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, trustworthiness, loyalty, filial piety, chastity, courage, and fortitude (Figure 2). In interviews, a university professor said: The wood carvings in the Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi are mostly based on folk legends and historical stories, and contain rich Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist thoughts. They play an important role in helping college students establish high ideals and beliefs, and form a correct outlook on life and values.

At the same time, participants' identification with and practice of traditional morality is strengthened through the daily activities conducted in the Guild Hall Buildings. For example, the opera houses in the Guild Halls often staged plays that promoted loyalty, filial piety, integrity, and righteousness, which not only enriched the immigrants' spiritual lives but also inculcated positive values. On the other hand, the Guild Hall also performed functions such as charity and social relief, promoting mutual assistance and friendship among fellow villagers, and laying a solid foundation for the orderly development of the commodity market and economic prosperity in southern Shaanxi during the Ming and Qing dynasties. The realization of these functions has played an important role in promoting traditional virtues and social harmony (Jiang, & Dian, 2007; Li, 2017; Chen, 2018).

The Strategies for Integrating Guild Hall Building Culture in Southern Shaanxi into Local University Cultural Literacy Education

Through focus group discussion, the researchers discussed with heritage conservation specialists, scholars of Guild Hall Buildings, experts in the field of education, government

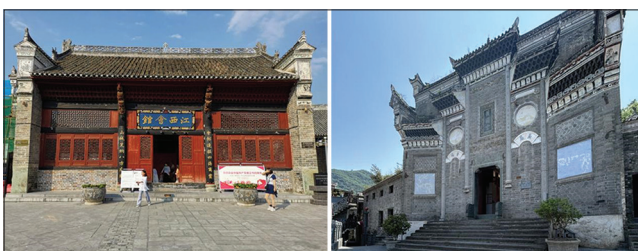


Figure 1. Shiquan County Jiangxi Guild Hall; Xunyang County Huangzhou Guild Hall
Source. Xiuchun Li (2023, 2024)

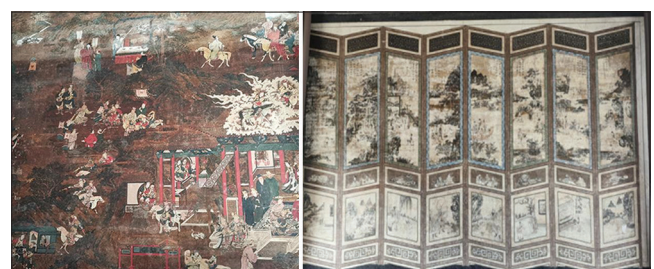


Figure 2. Murals in the Beiwu Hall
Source. Xiuchun Li (2024)

officials from the management units of Guild Hall Buildings, and university professors on the topic of “The Strategies for Integrating Guild Hall Building Culture in Southern Shaanxi into Local University Cultural Literacy Education” and reached the following conclusions:

Explore the cultural elements of the Guild Hall Building and enrich the course content

Teachers gain a deep understanding of the thinking behind the construction of Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi by reading relevant literature and books on pedagogy and architecture, and explore the teaching elements that can be used in the Guild Hall Building culture in southern Shaanxi. To enrich the teaching content, a teaching resource database will be established. This enables students to develop a new understanding of traditional architectural culture during their studies, and enhances the influence of traditional architectural culture.

The school regularly organizes seminars and symposiums with experts and famous teachers in the fields of architecture and education, providing opportunities and platforms for teachers to gain a deeper understanding of relevant theories in education and architecture and architectural culture. The school promotes face-to-face dialogues between teachers and experts so that they can deeply feel the close connection between architectural culture and literacy education. Teachers will learn techniques for integrating architectural culture and literacy education, and introduce more social cases that are close to real life, conducive to students’ understanding, and meet teaching requirements, taking into account students’ characteristics, teaching conditions, and their own advantages, etc., to enrich teaching methods. Through the integration of teaching resources, students will fully appreciate the cultural characteristics and historical heritage of Guild Hall Buildings, experience the diversity of cultural forms, promote students’ understanding of architectural culture and enhance their cultural literacy.

Expand the practical training of architectural culture and promote the depth of architectural culture integration

Universities can organize visits for students to existing Guild Hall Buildings or ruins to learn about the history, style, characteristics and cultural connotations behind Guild Hall Building. Students can experience the physical space for themselves and get a close-up sense of the historical weight and uniqueness of Guild Hall Building, enhancing their sensory experience of knowledge. By observing and studying the architectural style, craftsmanship and decorative art of historical buildings, students can improve their ability to appreciate art and their aesthetic cultivation, and stimulate their interest and love for architectural art. At the same time, architectural experts or managers of Guild Hall Buildings can be invited to explain the history and cultural background of Guild Hall Buildings to students, deepen their understanding and knowledge of architectural culture, and cultivate their sense of cultural identity.

Organize practical activities on the theme of architectural culture, such as architectural model-making competitions,

architectural photography competitions, and lectures on architectural culture, to enable students to gain an in-depth understanding of architectural culture through practice and improve their practical skills. Encourage students to participate in social practices related to architectural culture in their spare time, such as conducting field research and participating in ancient architectural conservation projects. Allow students to experience and gain a deep understanding of the value and significance of architectural culture, stimulate their interest and love for architectural culture, and strengthen their cultural identity and sense of mission.

Strengthen the promotion of architectural culture and expand the scope of its integration

Colleges can use campus culture platforms such as campus websites and official WeChat accounts to regularly publish articles, pictures and videos related to architectural culture, so that students can understand the charm of architectural culture from different perspectives and enhance their cultural confidence and awareness. Invite students to share their experiences of visiting Guild Hall Buildings or tell stories related to Guild Hall Buildings. This interactive approach not only increases students’ sense of participation, but also cultivates their sense of ownership and responsibility.

Organize cultural activities. For example, organizing cultural activities related to Guild Halls, such as folk culture festivals and opera performances, allows teachers and students to experience the unique charm of Guild Hall Buildings through participation, thus enhancing the overall cultural atmosphere of the university. In the process of participating in these activities, teachers and students will deepen their understanding and knowledge of Guild Hall Buildings and the historical culture behind it, thereby increasing the popularity and influence of Guild Hall Buildings. These activities not only enrich students’ extracurricular lives, but also promote the prosperity and development of campus culture.

Create a multi-level online teaching model to promote the inheritance and development of architectural culture

Use 3D scanning technology and drone photography to comprehensively and multi-angle photograph and scan the Guild Hall buildings and create detailed digital archives. Include all information related to the Guild Hall Buildings to facilitate academic research and cultural dissemination.

Use VR (virtual reality), AR (augmented reality), and other technologies to create a virtual reality platform. This will enable the public to experience the three-dimensional reality of the Guild Hall Buildings online and feel its historical atmosphere and cultural connotation. In addition, online exhibitions can be held using augmented reality technology to display historical photos and cultural relics of the Guild Hall Buildings, providing a richer experience for students of various majors and allowing more people to understand the cultural value of the Guild Hall Buildings.

Relying on digital archives and virtual reality platforms, online courses and lectures can be offered, with experts in the field of architecture invited to teach, to disseminate the

design concepts, construction techniques, cultural value, and other content of Guild Hall Buildings. At the same time, on-line discussions on the significance of Guild Hall Buildings in modern society and their preservation strategies can be held to generate ideas for the preservation and use of Guild Hall Buildings.

Develop digital educational applications such as interactive maps and virtual laboratories to simulate the construction process of Guild Hall Buildings, so that students can build virtual buildings in a virtual environment and learn about Guild Hall Buildings. At the same time, modules such as interactive quizzes and games can be set up to increase student engagement.

Through the above strategies, the Guild Hall Building culture of southern Shaanxi can be more effectively integrated into the cultural education of universities, not only enriching the content of the curriculum and enhancing students' cultural literacy and cultural identity, but also promoting the prosperity and development of university culture, and achieving a virtuous interaction between the preservation of architectural cultural heritage and the development of universities.

DISCUSSION

Discussion Based on Research Objectives

This study thoroughly explores the educational value and strategy of Guild Hall Building in Southern Shaanxi in integrating the culture of Guild Hall Buildings into the cultural education of local universities. The results of the study show that Guild Hall Building is not only a witness of history, but also a carrier of cultural integration, which has rich educational value and can play an important role in modern education. Integrating Guild Hall Building culture into cultural literacy education in colleges and universities not only improves students' cultural identity and critical thinking, but also strengthens their cultural identity and sense of social responsibility towards architectural cultural heritage. The effectiveness of Cultural Literacy Education in enhancing students' understanding and awareness of heritage conservation has been verified, highlighting the importance of education in heritage conservation (Djafar & Djafri, 2024; Rahman & Abdulkarim, 2024).

At the same time, this study extends the discussion of heritage conservation strategies in the existing literature. It was found that students' sense of identity and responsibility towards cultural heritage can be enhanced through educational interventions. This is in line with Goodarzarparvari and Camejo (2018) and Ztemiz (2020), who argue that cultural literacy education is essential for the transmission and conservation of cultural heritage. It also supports Peng and Sirisuk's (2024) view that education is a central function of cultural heritage interpretation.

In addition, this study proposes a number of specific strategies, such as enriching curriculum content, expanding practical training, enhancing cultural promotion, and creating multi-level online teaching strategies. Although the main target group of the study is students in higher education, the

results have implications for other sectors of education. For example, primary and secondary education can also draw on these strategies to improve students' cultural literacy and heritage conservation through field trips and experiential learning. They can also be applied to community and adult education to encourage participation and support for heritage conservation. These findings provide educators and heritage managers with practical tools to foster appreciation and conservation awareness of cultural heritage in the next generation.

New Findings

The findings of this study may have important implications for modelling and explaining real-life psychological phenomena related to heritage conservation. For example, by participating in cultural education activities, individuals' sense of cultural identity may be strengthened and their sense of social responsibility and citizenship may be enhanced. This is consistent with research on the impact of cultural heritage on identity and values. In addition, the results of this study may explain why certain heritage education program have been successful in increasing public support and participation in heritage conservation.

Despite some positive results of this study, there are still issues that need to be further discussed. For example, how can these educational strategies be replicated on a larger scale to ensure their effectiveness and feasibility in different regions and among different social groups? Secondly, the time span of the study is limited and we need to further investigate how to assess the impact of heritage education program on students' long-term attitudes and behavior.

CONCLUSION

This study, through qualitative research methods, this study demonstrates that Guild Hall Buildings in southern Shaanxi have important educational value, and explores the value and strategies of integrating Guild Hall Building culture in southern Shaanxi into the cultural literacy education of local universities. The results show that this integration is not only crucial for the conservation of architectural heritage, but also has a significant impact on improving students' cultural literacy and critical thinking, while strengthening students' cultural identity and social responsibility towards architectural heritage. The strategies proposed in this study provide a practical framework for universities to integrate architectural culture into cultural education, not only enriching the content of teaching, but also improving students' ability to appreciate art and its aesthetic achievements, and stimulating their interest and enthusiasm for heritage conservation. Research also shows that universities play a key role in the protection and promotion of cultural heritage. The cooperation between schools and communities also promotes the protection and inheritance of cultural heritage, enhances the conservation awareness of community members, and thus promotes the long-term protection of the Guild Hall Buildings in Southern Shaanxi.

The findings of the study make an important contribution to the wider debate on heritage conservation and cultural

education, highlighting the potential of educational program to influence attitudes and behavior towards heritage, and providing a solid foundation for further research into the conservation of similar architectural heritage.

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