

# Construction Pathways for Practice Teaching Bases of Li Brocade Craftsmanship in Higher Education Institutions from the Perspective of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Living Transmission

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**Abstract:** Li brocade, the primary embodiment of Li ethnic traditional spinning, dyeing, weaving, and embroidery techniques, is recognized as a “living fossil in the history of human textiles” and a significant intangible cultural heritage of China. Its living transmission safeguards the bloodline of ethnic culture and perpetuates regional cultural legacy. Higher education institutions are important venues for cultural transmission and talent cultivation. Establishing practice teaching bases for Li brocade in higher education institutions is conducive to promoting the effective alignment between the living transmission of Li brocade and the talent cultivation in higher education institutions. However, current construction of practice teaching bases for Li brocade craftsmanship in higher education institutions still faces challenges such as vague positioning, shortage of qualified instructors, lack of practical training components, and insufficient cooperation, challenging to achieve the dynamic synergy of living transmission and educational mission. Based on the fundamental requirements for ICH living transmission, this paper analyzes the teaching status in higher education institutions, discusses the significance and existing challenges in base construction, and proposes actionable specific measures, aiming to enable the Li brocade craftsmanship to be livingly transmitted in university practice and cultivate applied talents with disciplinary expertise and transmission consciousness.

**Keywords:** Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Living Transmission; Li Brocade Craftsmanship Skills; Higher Education Institutions

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## 1. Introduction

The dynamic core of ICH living transmission lies in its “living process”—passing on craftsmanship through practice while evolving techniques through transmission, thereby integrating ICH into contemporary life and imbuing it with renewed vitality. The Li brocade craftsmanship is a traditional handicraft passed down from generation to generation among the Li people, embodying rich cultural connotations and aesthetic implications of the Li ethnic group. In 2024, the Li ethnic traditional spinning, dyeing, weaving and embroidery techniques it relies on were elevated from the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding to the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, indicating that its transmission has reached a new starting point <sup>[1]</sup>. However, currently, most universities are still in the initial stage of building practice teaching bases for Li brocade. There are a series of practical challenges that need to be addressed, which significantly impact the living transmission effectiveness of Li brocade and the educational function of the training bases. Therefore, it is essential and urgent to conduct a reasonable planning and construction of the practice teaching bases for Li brocade in higher education institutions from the perspective of ICH living transmission.

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## **2.The Great Significance for Constructing Practice Teaching Bases of Li Brocade Craftsmanship in Higher Education Institutions from the Perspective of ICH Living Transmission**

### ***2.1 Advancing the Living Transmission of Li Brocade to Perpetuate Cultural DNA of the Li Ethnic Group***

Currently, Li brocade craftsmanship faces critical challenges including severe aging of inheritors, disengagement among younger generations, and fracturing of transmission chains. Under these circumstances, reliance solely on voluntary community-based transmission initiatives has proven inadequate to meet contemporary imperatives. Meanwhile, the practice teaching bases in higher education institutions have launched systematic practice courses, integrating Li brocade craftsmanship into university talent cultivation process, enabling younger generations to learn Li brocade craftsmanship and become new inheritors to remediate craftsmanship transmission fracture. On the other hand, the training bases is practice-oriented, guiding students to explore the cultural connotations and craftsmanship mystery contained in mystery, enabling them to inherit the Li ethnic folk cultural concepts and aesthetic consciousness carried within it while mastering the craftsmanship, rendering the living transmission of Li brocade craftsmanship, thereby safeguarding the cultural DNA of the Li ethnic group.

### ***2.2 Enhancing University Practice Teaching to Cultivate Specialized Interdisciplinary Talent***

The practice teaching bases in higher education institutions transcend the traditional classroom teaching model, transforming the Li brocade craftsmanship from “knowledge learning” toward “hands-on operations”, enriching the practice teaching methods and content in higher education. According to the talent cultivation programs of relevant disciplines in higher education institutions (such as art design, cultural industry management, ethnology, etc.) in the practice process, they require students to master the main technical skills of Li brocade, including weaving, dyeing, weaving, and embroidery while enhancing their cultural quality, creativity and hands-on capabilities, aiming to cultivate applied talents with excellent professional competence and ICH protection awareness. This not only meets the employment and personal development needs of students, but also injects new energy into the development of Li brocade craftsmanship [2].

### ***2.3 Forging Campus-Society Linkages to Achieve School-Enterprise Collaborative Education***

As a millennia-old living repository of Chinese civilization, ICH embodies national memory, artisanal wisdom, and aesthetic paradigms, serving as a cornerstone for cultural confidence. The report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China clearly states: “Adhere to the position of Chinese culture, and extract and showcase the spiritual symbols and cultural essence of Chinese civilization.” The practice teaching bases serve as a bridge and bond linking universities, ICH inheritors, local enterprises and the society. The bases adopt measures such as inviting ICH inheritors to give lectures at universities and collaborating with local Li brocade enterprises to make university education better adapt to the needs of social development, and enable students to understand current development status and demands in the Li brocade industry, and enhance their employment competitiveness in practice. On the other hand, they equally encourage university research teams to engage in the study of Li brocade to contribute to Li brocade product R&D and brand building, achieving “transmission-driven development, and development-enhanced transmission”, fully leveraging the role of higher education institutions in serving local cultural construction [3].

## **3.Challenges in Constructing Practice Teaching Bases of Li Brocade Craftsmanship in Higher Education Institutions from the Perspective of ICH Living Transmission**

### ***3.1 Ambiguous Strategic Positioning of the Bases, Deviating from the Core Mission of Living Transmission***

When establishing practice teaching bases for Li brocade craftsmanship, some higher education institutions suffer from ambiguous strategic positioning, deviating from the core mission of living transmission, prioritizing form over substance. Some bases regard the base itself as an “ICH exhibition platform”, focusing solely on the exhibition of Li brocade works, lacking systematic practice teaching and craftsmanship transmission process, failing to achieve “transmission through practice”. Some bases are positioned as “training centers”, neglecting the exploration and

transmission of Li brocade culture. As a result, students only acquire specific skills yet fail to understand the cultural significance behind them. This does not conform to the core philosophy of “equal emphasis on skills and culture” for the living transmission of Li brocade, and impedes the living transmission of Li brocade culture.

### ***3.2 Insufficient Qualified Instructors Lacking Capacity to Sustain Operations***

Faculty is a crucial safeguard for the base construction and the ICH living transmission. However, currently, most university practice teaching bases for Li brocade craftsmanship suffer from insufficient qualified instructors, being grossly inadequate to meet the actual needs. On the one hand, most of the full-time teachers in universities come from art, design, and other fields. They lack systematic learning experiences of Li brocade craftsmanship. They do not have a thorough understanding of the key technical points of Li brocade in spinning, dyeing, weaving, and embroidery, nor of the cultural significance it embodies. Therefore, they fail to conduct effective practice teaching and technical guidance. On the other hand, the bases lack robust ICH Practitioner-Masters. Although some universities do engage folk artists as teachers, they are merely temporary teachers, lacking planned teaching arrangement and tutoring services. Moreover, these artists themselves do not have the teaching capabilities and fail to align with the psychological characteristics of university students, resulting in mediocre teaching outcomes.

### ***3.3 Disjointed Practice Teaching Devoid of Relevance and Innovation***

Practice teaching is an important way for ICH living transmission. However, currently, the bases suffer from seriously disjointed practice teaching. The first is disjointed teaching content. Practice teaching mainly focuses on the cultivation of fundamental skills, lacking content that integrates with the Li brocade industry and contemporary design philosophy, resulting in the skills learned by students failing to meet the social needs and them failing to carry out innovation practice. The second is monotonous teaching methods. It mainly adopts the master-apprentice transmission method, lacking various types of practical activities, which is not conducive to igniting learner agency and creative cognition. The third is the absence of practice environment. The bases primarily conduct teaching activities in the laboratories on campus, offering few opportunities for students to visit Li brocade production enterprises or folk-custom living environment to gain hands-on experience. As a result, students are challenging to understand the application scenarios of Li brocade craftsmanship, hindering their improvement of practical competencies.

### ***3.4 Absence of Collaborative Mechanisms, Resulting in Inadequate Resource Integration Capabilities***

The living transmission of Li brocade craftsmanship cannot be achieved without the joint efforts of universities, ICH inheritors, local government and enterprises. However, current base construction lacks an effective collaborative mechanism and possess weak resource integration capabilities. Most collaboration between universities and local ICH Protection Institutions, Li brocade enterprises and folk artists remain superficial and lacks substantive interaction, failing to effectively pool multi-stakeholder resources to catalyze base development. The government provides limited support for this project, and invests insufficient funds, resulting in significant difficulty in base operations. Enterprises’ engagement impetus is not high, and the “teaching-training-employment” integrated model is challenging to be implemented effectively, thereby failing to achieve talent cultivation and craftsmanship transmission in the bases.

## **4. Construction Pathways for Practice Teaching Bases of Li Brocade Craftsmanship in Higher Education Institutions from the Perspective of ICH Living Transmission**

### ***4.1 Clarifying the Bases’ Strategic Positioning to Anchor It in the Core Mission of Living Transmission***

Based on the dual requirements of ICH living transmission and talent cultivation in higher education institutions, it is necessary to determine the four dimensions: “craftsmanship transmission, talent cultivation, cultural transmission, and innovative development” in the bases in order to prevent problems such as ambiguous strategic positioning and superficial implementation. The first is to emphasize the subject status of the living transmission. In

the base development, practice teaching leads the process, adopting a tripartite transmission approach of “craftsmanship training + cultural excavation + practical innovation”. This enables students to master skills through hands-on operations while immersing themselves in the cultural ethos. The second is to align with the disciplinary characteristics in universities. Based on the cultivation objectives of different disciplines such as art design and cultural industry management, the Li brocade craftsmanship is introduced into relevant courses, achieving “integration of classroom teaching and ICH transmission”. The third is to serve the local development needs. Based on the current development status of the Li brocade industry, the bases should be built into important platforms that can accelerate local cultural construction and rural revitalization, and enhance their social service capabilities.

#### ***4.2 Strengthening Faculty Development to Cultivate a Multidisciplinary Teaching Force***

It is necessary to build a multidisciplinary teaching team consisting of “full-time university teachers, ICH inheritors, and enterprise elites” to support the base development. On the one hand, higher education institutions must strengthen the cultivation of full-time university teachers, regularly holding special classes on Li brocade craftsmanship, inviting ICH masters and industry experts to give lectures or hold seminars at universities to enhance teachers’ proficiency in Li brocade craftsmanship and their understanding of cultural heritage, enabling them to become professional talents with a solid theoretical foundation and excellent practical competencies. On the other hand, they must strengthen the development of ICH Practitioner-Masters, recruiting community-sourced ICH Practitioner-Masters as adjunct mentors for sustained collaboration with the training bases, providing them with systematic skills training and guidance on teaching techniques to enhance their teaching capabilities. Finally, they must introduce enterprise technical talents as teachers, inviting technicians and designers from Li brocade companies to give lessons at universities, enabling students to gain an understanding of the industrial development trends and market demands, and to enhance their hands-on capabilities and employment competitiveness.

#### ***4.3 Advancing Practical Training Curriculum Reform to Fuel the Living Transmission and Evolution of Craftsmanship***

Based on the principle of living transmission, it is necessary to improve practice teaching methods and approaches, and enhance the quality and effectiveness of practice teaching. On the one hand, it is essential to enrich and improve the practice teaching content, and structure four-tiered pedagogical content: Foundational Craftsmanship, Cultural Context Excavation, Regenerative Design, Applied Industry Pathways, adding the interpretation of Li brocade culture and the study of related folk knowledge while emphasizing the training of Li brocade fundamental skills (including spinning, dyeing, weaving, and embroidery), integrating with modern design philosophy to guide students to design and create innovative Li brocade works, enabling the ancient craftsmanship to be integrated into contemporary life. On the other hand, it is necessary to innovate practice teaching methods and approaches, transcend the traditional monolithic “master-apprentice transmission” model, and deploy multimodal experiential formats – including Craft Immersion Workshops, Heritage-informed Creation, Competition Exhibitions, and Cultural Immersion – to activate learners’ agentic participation, self-directed inquiry, and regenerative praxis. For example, the bases can organize the Li brocade creative product design competition or facilitate immersive village expeditions to Li ethnic communities, where participants engage in observational learning of local lifestyles and hands-on encounters with living craft traditions. In addition, a multi-tiered evaluation system and a timely and effective feedback system need to be established to continuously improve the quality of practice teaching. A student’s practice portfolio can be established to document their development history in the four aspects of “fundamental skills, cultural context exploration, creative design, and applied industry pathways”, implementing phased holistic assessment through triangulated methods: student self-evaluation, peer evaluation within groups, and teacher comments. Industry experts, ICH inheritors and entrepreneurs can be invited to engage in the teaching evaluation process, enabling the works to better meet the market demands and cultural transmission requirements. Students are encouraged to in converting the regenerative Li brocade products they create in class into start-up

projects or participating in provincial, municipal or even national cultural and creative competition, accelerating heritage cognition through competitive engagement, honing skills through public showcasing. School-enterprise collaborative platforms can also be established, enabling students' works to be displayed in tourism souvenir stores or cultural exhibitions, thereby achieving the socialization of educational outcomes. Through integrated cycles of pedagogical delivery, evidence-based assessment, and iterative refinement, this framework elevates learners' technical mastery and regenerative creativity while deepening cultural attachment and stewardship commitment to Li brocade culture. This achieves authentic living transmission and sustainable endogenous evolution of Li brocade craftsmanship among new generations.

#### **4.4 Establishing Collaborative Frameworks to Pool Multi-Stakeholder Resources for Sustainable Development of Bases**

It is necessary to change monolithic construction approaches, and adopt a quadripartite synergistic collaboration model of "university steering, government support, inheritor participation, and industry synergy", pooling multi-stakeholder resources for sustainable and healthy development of bases. On the one hand, leveraging the steering role of higher education institutions with institutional autonomy, universities lead in pedagogical governance, faculty development, and applied R&D innovation at the training bases. This catalyzes organic integration of Li brocade craftsmanship with discipline-specific pedagogy and research-driven regeneration. On the other hand, higher education institutions must make efforts to seek support from government departments, actively contacting with local ICH protection institutions, tourism bureau, and other relevant departments to obtain policy and financial support, catalyzing the base development, faculty development, and the implementation of practical activities. Concurrently, higher education institutions must enhance the cooperation with the ICH masters, establishing structured mechanisms for sustained interaction and mentorship engagement, so that the masters can play a critical role in the craftsmanship transmission.

### **5. Conclusion**

From the perspective of the ICH living transmission, practice teaching bases for Li Brocade craftsmanship is effective platforms for the living transmission of Li Brocade craftsmanship, the cultivation of interdisciplinary talents, and the promotion of local cultural development. However, current base construction still suffers from challenges such as ambiguous positioning, insufficient qualified instructors, disjointed practical activities, and insufficient cooperation, hindering the effective operations of the bases. Based on the fundamental understanding of ICH living transmission, after determining the functions of the bases, strengthening faculty development, improving practice curriculum offerings, and establishing collaborative mechanisms can all enhance the quality of the bases, thereby enabling the Li Brocade craftsmanship to be well transmitted and developed in practice classrooms at higher education institutions. In the future, higher education institutions should continuously advance base reform, promptly adjust and improve the measures and methods in response to the specific circumstances of Li brocade transmission and the developmental imperatives of the contemporary era, so as to rejuvenate the ancient Li brocade craftsmanship and contribute to the transmission of ethnic culture and talent cultivation in higher education institutions.

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