

# The Education Development and Transmission of Chinese Haiyang Yangge Folk Performances since 1949 in Shandong Province

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## Abstract

Haiyang Yangge, ancient folk performances hailing from Shandong Province, China, stands as a testament to the resilience of cultural traditions in the face of time and change. This study aims to investigate the education development and transmission of Chinese Haiyang Yangge folk performances since 1949 within the context of education in Shandong Province. The research site is the coastal city of Haiyang, celebrated for its deep-rooted connection to this art form and its proactive approach to cultural preservation and education policy. The investigation engages with six key informants, comprising seasoned scholars, dedicated actors, and long-standing community members. The study reveals three significant leaps in Haiyang Yangge's education development since 1949, driven by government support, adaptation to contemporary themes, and international recognition. These findings underscore the pivotal role of governmental policies in safeguarding and promoting intangible cultural heritage while also revealing challenges related to shifting generational preferences and urbanization. In conclusion, this research offers valuable insights and suggestions for preserving and revitalizing cultural traditions, emphasizing the importance of continued support for their transmission and relevance in education.

**Keywords:** Haiyang Yangge, intangible cultural heritage, cultural development, transmission, education policy, art education

## 1. Introduction

China, a land steeped in ancient traditions and cultural heritage, boasts a tapestry of diverse folk art forms that have endured the test of time (Lowry, 2005; Kutty, 2007). Among these, the enchanting rhythms of Haiyang Yangge dance resonate as a living testament to the resilience and adaptability of Chinese folk culture. Originating in the picturesque coastal city of Haiyang, situated in the heart of Shandong Province, Haiyang Yangge has traversed centuries and preserved its essence while dynamically responding to the transformative winds of history (Yue & Seekhunlio, 2024; Qiu et al., 2024).

As China emerged from the shadows of the revolution in 1949, the country embarked on a path of profound societal change. This era saw the birth of the People's Republic of China and marked a significant turning point in the nation's history. The dawn of this new era not only reshaped the socio-political landscape but also instigated a cultural metamorphosis that rippled through the veins of Chinese society. Against this backdrop, Haiyang Yangge, like many traditional art forms, embarked on its voyage of education development within the realms of education, education policy, and studies (Judd, 1990; Yeh, 2014; Garver, 2015; Zhang, 2020; Sun, 2023).

Haiyang, a coastal jewel nestled in the southern expanse of the Shandong Peninsula, serves as the cradle of Haiyang Yangge. Its geographical and cultural attributes have laid the foundation for the rich and diverse tapestry of this folk performance. The city's extensive coastline, low-lying hills, and fertile plains have sculpted the lives of its inhabitants. Due to the region's abundant marine resources and warm, temperate marine monsoon climate, Haiyang's residents have historically relied on fishing as a source of income (Yang et al., 2019; Song et al., 2020; Wu & Bhengsri, 2023).

The region's unique environmental and cultural characteristics have played an instrumental role in the birth and evolution of Haiyang Yangge. The profound connection between the people of Haiyang and the sea is ingrained in their spiritual and cultural practices (Jin, 2011; Chabrowski, 2015; Wei, 2023). An emblematic manifestation of this bond is the annual ritual of paying homage to the Sea Dragon King, fervently celebrated during the first month

of each lunar year. Yangge, with its spirited dances and vibrant rhythms, serves as the most fitting offering to the Sea Dragon King, symbolizing the people's hope for a bountiful harvest on the seas in the coming year. As a result, Haiyang Yangge teams from various villages have flourished, each adding its own unique flair and artistry to this time-honored tradition (Stepanchuk & Wong, 1991; Chau, 2008; Wang, 2023).

In recent years, Haiyang has undergone substantial economic development, reflecting broader trends in China's march toward modernization (Lufkin, 2016; Kielman, 2018). The improved living standards of its residents have amplified the yearning for a richer spiritual life, invigorating the ritualistic aspects of Haiyang Yangge within the context of education, education policy, and transmission studies. Consequently, this resurgence has not only enriched the art form but has also triggered innovative adaptations that harmoniously blend tradition with contemporary sensibilities (Zhang & You, 2019; Zhang, 2020).

The study of Haiyang Yangge's education development since 1949 holds profound significance for various reasons within the domains of education, education policy, and transmission studies. Firstly, it provides a unique lens through which to understand how traditional Chinese folk performances navigate the intricate terrain of shifting socio-political landscapes, shedding light on the implications for education and education policy. In the wake of China's transformative journey, Haiyang Yangge has proven itself adaptable, mirroring the evolving themes and aspirations of the populace. It serves as an exemplar of how indigenous cultural forms adjust to modernity while retaining their essence (Lu, 2008; Gong, 2008).

Secondly, this research endeavor illuminates the interplay between regional cultural influences and the broader national canvas, offering insights into the implications for education and education policy. The fusion of Dongyi and Qilu cultures within Haiyang Yangge encapsulates the rich diversity of China's cultural tapestry. By scrutinizing its evolution, we gain insights into the complex relationship between local traditions and the forging of national identity, contributing to a deeper appreciation of China's cultural mosaic (Zeng & Onlamul, 2023; Chen et al., 2023).

Moreover, Haiyang Yangge, a traditional Chinese folk art, is a significant cultural symbol in Shandong Province. It is a symbol of cultural pride and folk artistry, and its preservation and adaptation contribute to the discourse on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Haiyang Yangge's resilience and ability to bridge past and present offer a glimpse into China's rich cultural heritage, with implications for education, education policy, and transmission studies. This research explores the evolving soul of a nation, revealing Haiyang Yangge's profound story of tradition and innovation.

## **2. Research Objectives**

To investigate the education development and transmission of Chinese Haiyang Yangge folk performances since 1949 within the context of education in Shandong Province.

## **3. Literature Review**

Haiyang Yangge, a traditional folk dance originating in the coastal city of Haiyang in Shandong Province, stands as a captivating example of how cultural traditions evolve and endure through history. Haiyang Yangge has experienced significant education development since the People's Republic of China's founding in 1949 as a result of the complex interaction of socio-political factors, regional influences, and shifting societal dynamics. In this literature review, we explore existing research and scholarship that shed light on the education development and transmission of Haiyang Yangge in the context of modern China, with a particular focus on its relevance within education, education policy, and transmission studies.

### *3.1 Historical Roots and Evolution*

The roots of Haiyang Yangge can be traced back to the Western Zhou Dynasty, marking its origins more than a thousand years ago. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the art form began to take on its characteristic dance steps and musical accompaniment, solidifying its place in local cultural festivities. Researchers such as Li and Zhang (2017) emphasize the historical significance of Haiyang Yangge, tracing its development from ancient sacrificial dance rituals to a popular form of entertainment. Within the context of education and transmission studies, it is essential to examine how institutions have contributed to the preservation, transmission, and academic study of this rich history.

### *3.2 Cultural Significance and Regional Identity*

Haiyang Yangge has played a crucial role in shaping the cultural identity of the Haiyang region. Scholars like Wang (2015) highlight how this folk performance is deeply intertwined with the local geography and the spiritual connection between the Haiyang community and the sea. It serves as a symbol of the region's reliance on fishing

and its unique coastal culture. Furthermore, Haiyang Yangge's emphasis on the worship of the Sea Dragon King underscores its role in preserving traditional rituals (Chen, 2020). Understanding how educational policies and institutions in the region have supported or influenced this cultural significance and transmission is a critical aspect of our research.

### *3.3 Influences of the Dongyi and Qilu Cultures*

The Dongyi and Qilu cultures have also influenced the education development and transmission of Haiyang Yangge. As mentioned earlier, Shandong Province, including Haiyang, is considered the heartland of Dongyi culture. Researchers like Liu and Zheng (2019) emphasize how the Dongyi culture has left a lasting impact on Haiyang Yangge's dance steps and sacrificial dance traditions. This cultural fusion contributes to the art form's unique character. Within the context of education, education policy, and transmission studies, it is crucial to explore how educational institutions have incorporated these cultural influences into their curriculum, research, and programs.

### *3.4 Socio-Political Shifts and Innovations*

The period since 1949 marks a significant chapter in Haiyang Yangge's history. With the founding of the People's Republic of China, the government's commitment to preserving and promoting national culture led to increased attention to folk art forms, including Haiyang Yangge (Cheng, 2016). Researchers such as Wu (2021) explore how this period saw the integration of socialist themes into Haiyang Yangge, reflecting the prevailing socio-political ideology of the time. This innovation propelled Haiyang Yangge to national recognition. Understanding the role of educational institutions in promoting these socio-political shifts, innovations, and transmission efforts is a vital aspect of our research.

### *3.5 Contemporary and International Expansion*

The 1990s brought significant transformations to Haiyang Yangge. Local authorities embarked on a mission to promote Haiyang Yangge nationwide and internationally (Zhang et al., 2000). Substantial investments, artistic direction, and participation in international dance festivals led to accolades, including the "Golden Rose" award and participation in the Shenyang International Folk Dance (Yangge) Festival. Researchers such as Guo (2002) highlight the role of international exposure in Haiyang Yangge's development. Investigating how education institutions have contributed to this contemporary and international expansion, both in terms of education and transmission, is essential.

In conclusion, the literature reviewed here underscores the multifaceted journey of Haiyang Yangge since 1949 within the realms of education, education policy, and transmission studies. It reflects the art form's capacity to adapt to modernity while preserving its cultural essence. By examining historical, cultural, and socio-political dimensions in the context of education and education policy, this research aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of Haiyang Yangge's cultural evolution within educational settings. Furthermore, it contributes to the broader discourse on the preservation and revitalization of intangible cultural heritage in China and beyond, particularly within the sphere of education. This literature review sets the stage for a deeper exploration of the factors that have shaped Haiyang Yangge's enduring cultural legacy in the subsequent phases of our research.

## **4. Methodology**

### *4.1 Selection of the Research Site*

This study focuses on Haiyang, a coastal city in Shandong Province, China, which is known for its historical connection to Haiyang Yangge and its commitment to cultural preservation and education policy. The study will explore the relationship between education, education policy, and the transmission of Haiyang Yangge in a culturally significant and dynamic environment, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the cultural landscape.

#### 4.2 Data Collection Methods

Table 1. Data collection methods

Data collection	Research Methods
In-Depth Interviews	The study involved in-depth interviews with Haiyang Yangge performers, cultural experts, local authorities, and community members to gain qualitative insights into the education development of the art form since 1949, using open-ended questions to encourage participation
Observations	Participant observation was conducted during live Haiyang Yangge performances, community events, and cultural festivals in Shandong Province, documenting context, practices, and audience reactions
Archival Research	The study reviewed historical documents, photographs, and audiovisual materials related to Haiyang Yangge performances, sourced from local archives and cultural institutions, to understand the evolution of Haiyang Yangge as a folk performance art

#### 4.3 Data Analysis Methods

Table 2. Data analysis methods

Data Analysis	Research Methods
Thematic Analysis	Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data from in-depth interviews and observations, identifying recurring themes and patterns related to Haiyang Yangge's cultural development. These themes were categorized and interpreted to provide a comprehensive understanding of the art form's evolution
Content Analysis	The study utilized content analysis to analyze historical documents, photographs, and audiovisual materials to understand the evolution, innovations, and adaptations of Haiyang Yangge as a cultural practice, providing valuable insights into its historical trajectory

#### 4.4 Key informants

Table 3. Six key informants

Key Informants	Description
Scholar Informants (Two persons)	Over 30 years of research experience. They must have received important provincial-level awards for their contributions to Haiyang Yangge research and scholarship
Casual Informants (Two persons)	Actors with over three years of experience in Haiyang Yangge, providing valuable insights into its practical aspects. Young actors, who actively promoted and transmitted Haiyang Yangge
General Informants (Two persons)	Local villagers over 60 years old, living in Haiyang, provide a unique perspective on the community's evolution of Haiyang Yangge, as they are long-standing members of the community.

### 5. Result

#### 5.1 The Education Development of Haiyang Yangge Folk Performances Since 1949

##### 5.1.1 The First Historic Leap (From 1949 to the 1950s)

As society evolved, Haiyang Yangge experienced continuous changes in its form and content. However, its cherished place in the hearts of the people remained unwavering. Watching and performing Yangge consistently brought immense joy to the locals. On the first day of each new year, the resounding beats of Yangge drums and gongs drew men, women, the old, and the young, who flocked to witness this spectacle. Every available space, from walls and rooftops to trees, became crowded with eager onlookers. "No Yangge, no New Year" became a popular saying among the masses, emphasizing the deep affection for this art form. This enduring love provided the foundation for the continued existence, transmission, and development of Haiyang Yangge.



Figure 1. Sea sacrifice ceremony performed by Haiyang Yangge

Source: You Lin (from fieldwork, 2023)

Following the founding of the People's Republic of China and the policy of "letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend," the state prioritized the promotion of national culture. Mass cultural departments and art groups were encouraged to explore and document folk cultural heritage while organizing various dance performances. During the 1950s, the nation began earnestly supporting the development of the literary and artistic industries, introducing policies to foster their growth. In response to the national call, Haiyang's local government established a cultural center in 1951 to elevate Haiyang Yangge to a higher platform. In 1959, Yantai extended an invitation to Haiyang for a dance performance. Recognizing the significance of this opportunity, local Haiyang authorities took substantial measures to ensure an outstanding performance. They innovated and adapted Haiyang Yangge, presenting it at the Yantai dance performance under the banner of "Long live the people's commune." This adaptation prominently incorporated the socialist themes of the era, particularly highlighting the bountiful harvests in local rural areas. The success of this artistic endeavor garnered widespread acclaim and national attention, marking the first major innovation and the climax of Haiyang Yangge's prosperity. Subsequently, Haiyang Yangge earned recognition as "one of the three major Yangge styles in Shandong," securing nationwide renown.

This newfound prominence attracted numerous scholars and art enthusiasts to explore Haiyang's folk culture and customs. Their endeavors significantly fueled the development of Haiyang Yangge, establishing it as a key player in Shandong Province's Yangge art scene.

#### 5.1.2 The Second Historic Leap (Early 1990s)

Haiyang Yangge, a traditional art form in Haiyang, experienced significant changes during the ten years of political turmoil. Local leaders sought to preserve the cultural essence of Haiyang Yangge while adapting it to the rapidly changing world. After extensive deliberations, the local government and cultural departments agreed to promote Haiyang Yangge nationwide and internationally under the slogan "Twist Haiyang, Dance Across the Nation, and Go Global."

Despite financial constraints, the county government allocated over 100,000 yuan for the revitalization, refinement, and innovation of Haiyang Yangge. Renowned directors and instructors, including Zhang Yinsong and Xu Qiang, led the effort. The reconstructed Haiyang Yangge production participated in the fourth Shenyang International Folk Dance Festival in 1994, winning the "Golden Rose" award. This marked the beginning of Haiyang Yangge's national and international recognition.

In 1995, Haiyang Yangge made it one of the top ten news items in Yantai, receiving the National "Stars Award" silver medal. In 1996, it secured the gold medal at the Shandong Provincial Culture and Art Festival and was featured in the Shandong Provincial Spring Festival Gala for two consecutive years. In 1997, Haiyang City was officially designated as "the Hometown of Chinese Folk Art," solidifying Haiyang Yangge's status as a beloved and award-winning art form.

Directors, performers, choreographers, and directors received silver medals from the Ministry of Culture's "Stars Award," and monetary rewards were distributed to all Yangge performers. Haiyang Yangge's performances continued to captivate audiences and earn accolades.

### 5.1.3 The Third Historic Leap (Early 21st Century)

The implementation of China's reform and opening-up strategy laid the foundation for the third leap of Haiyang Yangge. During this period, China began to engage more extensively with the world, marking a departure from isolationism. Haiyang Yangge adapted to the changing times, continually innovating, and developing while expanding its reach to audiences nationwide.

Haiyang Yangge changed throughout the reform and opening-up eras because of the vibrant content that diligent local workers produced. As China emerged on the global stage, Haiyang Yangge followed suit, with a repertoire rich in vivid and engaging performances. In 2006, Haiyang Yangge achieved a milestone by being included in the first batch of China's national intangible cultural heritage, further solidifying its position in China's folk art community. In April 2007, Haiyang Yangge earned the "Most Popular Program of the Audience" award in CCTV's dance competition. In 2008, it was invited to perform as part of the prelude to the 29th Beijing Olympics' opening ceremony. In 2012, Haiyang Yang participated in the opening ceremony of the Asian Games. In October 2015, a production directed by Guo Jingyu and others premiered on the Shanghai News Comprehensive Channel, centered around Haiyang Yangge, a local folk custom. The narrative follows the legendary journey of a beggar who transforms into a hero at a young age. In January 2018, the film "To Live to Heaven," directed by Li Jingtang and co-produced by a Haiyang native director, officially premiered at the Pipa Island Film and Television Base in Haiyang. The film was shot entirely in Haiyang, marking Haiyang's entry onto the global stage.



Figure 2. The education development timeline of Haiyang Yangge

Source: You Lin (from fieldwork, 2023)

With this third leap, Haiyang Yangge entered a new phase of development. In the contemporary landscape, various forms of entertainment have proliferated, and young people increasingly seek novelty, diverting attention away from appreciating the profound cultural treasures of folk traditions. Additionally, the aging of the inheritors and other factors are currently constraining the development of intangible cultural heritage dances, including Haiyang Yangge, leading to a scenario where there may be no successors to carry it forward. This decline among inheritors is a lamentable phenomenon. The traditional model of "father-son transmission" and "teacher-apprentice reception" profoundly embodies the core of traditional Chinese culture. Folk dances today face difficulties brought about by modern civilization, leading to problems like a lack of successors.

In conclusion, the growth of Haiyang Yangge since 1949 has been characterized by resiliency, adaptability, and a strong bond with the neighborhood. With each historic leap, it has reached new heights of recognition and acclaim, firmly establishing itself as a cherished cultural treasure in Shandong Province and beyond.

## 5.2 *Transmission of Haiyang Yangge*

### 5.2.1 The Transmission of Haiyang Yangge Before 1949

Before 1949, Haiyang Yangge, with a history spanning over 600 years, held a special place in the hearts of the local population due to its distinctive geographical and cultural context. However, before the establishment of New China in 1949, when people endured oppression and hardship, the transmission of Haiyang Yangge relied largely on oral traditions, with limited written records to document its history. Yu Xin, a Haiyang Yangge transmitter, emphasized the significance of Haiyang Yangge as a source of inspiration during times of oppression. He explained, “Before 1949, New China had not yet been established, and people suffered oppression and suffering. They used Haiyang Yangge to promote the war of resistance and boost their fighting spirit.”

During the pre-1949 era, when Haiyang Yangge slowly developed, the survival challenges posed by war and chaos hindered its transmission. The art form, which was primarily used for sacrificial and entertainment purposes, had simple melodies and improvised lyrics, often tailored to the circumstances at hand. A Haiyang Yangge transmitter, recalled, “Haiyang Yangge did not have good transmission and development before liberation, almost allowing it to develop naturally.”

Ancestors of Haiyang Yangge transmitters, who held a deep affinity for the art form, conveyed stories of significant changes in Haiyang Yangge’s nature before liberation. At that time, the number of Yangge teams in Haiyang was limited, and Yangge operas and performances, though present, suffered from poor transmission and faded into relative obscurity. This period saw a decline in the improvisational singing aspect of Haiyang Yangge, with more focus on dance performances.

### 5.2.2 The Transmission of Haiyang Yangge after the 1949s

Due to changing social dynamics and governmental policies, Haiyang Yangge’s transmission underwent significant changes in the post-1949 era. Interviews with Haiyang Yangge transmitters provided insights into this transformative phase.

Haiyang Yangge transmitters observed a growing awareness of the importance of Haiyang Yangge’s transmission after liberation. The country began to pay attention to its cultural heritage, prompting dance professionals, cultural workers, and folk artists to collaborate in learning and exploring Haiyang Yangge. The mid-20th century, the 1990s, and the early 21st century witnessed periods of rapid development in Haiyang Yangge, largely driven by government attention and support. However, in recent times, shifts in young people’s preferences have presented challenges to Haiyang Yangge’s transmission.

Improved living conditions have allowed people to dedicate more time to Haiyang Yangge, and government policies have promoted and preserved this art form. Before liberation, Haiyang Yangge was primarily transmitted through methods like apprenticeship and family inheritance. Today, it relies on personal preferences, apprenticeship, family inheritance, and government-supported initiatives for learning and transmission. However, the migration of young people to urban areas has led to a decline in enthusiasm for Haiyang Yangge, and the passing of older transmitters has affected its transmission.

Younger Haiyang Yangge transmitters express their passion for preserving and sharing this cultural treasure with a global audience. Recent years have witnessed increased government attention to folk intangible cultural heritage, resulting in better transmission through various competitions and performance events, such as the China (Weihai) New Yangge Competition, the Shandong Fitness Yangge Competition, the Spring Festival Yangge Performance, and the CCTV Square Dance Competition. These initiatives have contributed to the more vibrant and recognized transmission of Haiyang Yangge.

In summary, Haiyang Yangge’s transmission history reflects its resilience and adaptability in the face of changing social and political landscapes. While challenges persist, particularly in engaging younger generations, government support and the dedication of transmitters and enthusiasts have sustained and elevated the cultural significance of Haiyang Yangge in contemporary times. Haiyang Yangge, a traditional folk dance rooted in Shandong Province, China, has evolved significantly since the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949. This research explores the education development and transmission of Haiyang Yangge within the context of education, education policy, and broader societal changes. It aims to provide comprehensive insights into this folk performance’s enduring legacy and its relationship with educational settings, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Key findings regarding the transmission of Haiyang Yangge

Aspect transmission	Before 1949	After 1949
History and Cultural Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Over 600 years of history</li> <li>- Grew in significance during times of oppression</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adored for its unique cultural context</li> <li>- Became a symbol of resistance and inspiration</li> </ul>
Transmission Modes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Predominantly oral transmission</li> <li>- Transitioned to formalized learning and preservation</li> <li>- Limited written records</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaboration between professionals and artists</li> <li>- Apprenticeship and family inheritance</li> <li>- Government-supported initiatives for preservation</li> </ul>
Art Form Evolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Slow development</li> <li>- Rapid development in the mid-20th century and beyond</li> <li>- Simplistic melodies and improvised lyrics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evolved with improved living conditions</li> <li>- Focused on dance performances</li> <li>- Government policies promoted and preserved Haiyang Yangge</li> </ul>
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Survival challenges during war and chaos</li> <li>- Shifting preferences of younger generations</li> <li>- Limited awareness of transmission importance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Migration of young people to urban areas</li> <li>- Decline in improvisational singing aspect</li> <li>- Aging of older transmitters affecting transmission</li> </ul>
Initiatives for Preservation and Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Government policies post-liberation</li> <li>- Various competitions and performance events</li> <li>- Growing government support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased government attention to folk heritage</li> <li>- Improved living conditions</li> <li>- Enhanced transmission through competitions and events</li> </ul>

## 6. Discussion and Conclusions

The research conducted in this study explores the education development and transmission of Haiyang Yangge, a traditional folk dance in Shandong Province, China, within the context of education, education policy, and broader societal changes. The discussion will analyze the findings about the theoretical principles discussed in the literature review and evaluate whether the research results are consistent with or inconsistent with these principles.

The study's findings regarding the education development of Haiyang Yangge since 1949 demonstrate the dance's adaptability and resilience in response to changing social and political landscapes. The theoretical principles of cultural preservation and adaptation (Hafstein, 2014) align with the research results. Despite various historical challenges, Haiyang Yangge has consistently evolved while maintaining its significance in the local culture. The case of Haiyang Yangge serves as an example of how government policies and cultural initiatives can help intangible cultural heritage thrive (Kuang et al., 2023). This aligns with the literature that emphasizes the importance of government attention and support for the preservation of intangible cultural heritage (Lee, 2020).

The three historic leaps identified in the research provide insights into how Haiyang Yangge adapted to various historical contexts. Notably, during the 1950s, Haiyang Yangge integrated socialist themes, contributing to its nationwide recognition. This adaptation resonates with the concept of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage by making it relevant to contemporary society (Smith & Akagawa, 2018). The successful incorporation of socialist themes demonstrates the art form's ability to evolve while retaining its core elements.

The transmission of Haiyang Yangge before and after 1949 highlights the shift from predominantly oral transmission to formalized learning and preservation after the establishment of the People's Republic of China. The study's findings align with the theoretical principle that government policies play a crucial role in safeguarding and transmitting intangible cultural heritage (Postiglione, 2008). In this case, government attention and support led to the formalization of transmission methods, collaboration between professionals and artists, and the participation of younger generations in learning and preserving Haiyang Yangge.

Challenges related to shifting preferences among younger generations and the migration of young people to urban areas are consistent with the literature on the difficulties faced by traditional folk art in the modern age (Tang, 2021). However, the research results also indicate that government-supported initiatives, such as competitions and events, have contributed to the vibrant transmission of Haiyang Yangge, showcasing the importance of continued governmental involvement (Yan & Chiou, 2021).

In conclusion, this research provides valuable insights into the education development and transmission of Haiyang Yangge, shedding light on its resilience, adaptability, and significance within the context of education, education policy, and broader societal changes. The findings are consistent with theoretical principles related to



cultural preservation, adaptation, and government support for intangible cultural heritage.

Haiyang Yangge's ability to evolve while maintaining its cultural essence serves as a testament to the enduring nature of traditional folk art. The study underscores the importance of government policies in preserving and promoting intangible cultural heritage, emphasizing the need for continued support to address the challenges posed by shifting preferences and urbanization.

Overall, Haiyang Yangge stands as a cultural treasure in Shandong Province, symbolizing the rich tapestry of China's intangible cultural heritage. Its journey of education development and transmission exemplifies the dynamic relationship between tradition and modernity, offering valuable lessons for the preservation of similar cultural traditions worldwide. Future research on Haiyang Yangge should compare it with other traditional folk dances, explore strategies for younger generations to preserve and transmit it, and integrate it into education systems. Comparative studies and innovative approaches, such as technology integration and tailored programs, can help understand the unique characteristics and adaptations of Haiyang Yangge within cultural traditions.

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### **Informed consent**

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The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

### **Data sharing statement**

No additional data are available.

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