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MODERN LANDSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINES BASED ON TRADITIONAL CULTURE: A CASE STUDY OF NINGWU COUNTY IN SHANXI PROVINCE

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Abstract

This study investigates the innovative application of traditional Chinese cultural elements in modern landscape design, focusing on Ningwu County, Shanxi Province. Through a questionnaire survey of 208 respondents, the research explores how these elements enhance aesthetic value, deepen cultural identity, and promote tourism. The findings indicate that integrating traditional cultural elements significantly boosts the public's sense of belonging and enriches the landscape's artistic charm. The research employs both qualitative and quantitative methods, revealing strong public acceptance of traditional elements and their potential to attract tourism. The study provides insights and recommendations for effectively inheriting and promoting cultural heritage in landscape design, emphasizing the importance of public participation and the incorporation of local characteristics.

Keywords: Traditional Culture, Landscape Design, Cultural Identity,

Introduction

Ningwu County, as a region rich in cultural heritage, provides an ideal case study for exploring how traditional cultural elements can be effectively integrated into modern landscape design. By analyzing the perceptions and attitudes of local residents, this study aims to reveal the potential of traditional cultural elements in enhancing cultural depth, uniqueness, and sustainability. We believe that through effective public participation and the integration of local characteristics, landscapes can be created that are both functional and culturally meaningful.

Research Objectives

This study aims to explore how to effectively integrate traditional cultural elements into modern landscape design to meet functional requirements and cultural expectations. Taking Ningwu County as an example, the research will analyze residents' perceptions and attitudes towards these elements, and explore their potential to enhance the cultural depth, uniqueness, and sustainability of the landscape.

Scope of Research

This study takes Ningwu County, rich in cultural heritage, as the research subject. It explores how to combine traditional elements such as architecture, handicrafts, and local operas with modern design concepts through spatial layout, material selection, and plant arrangement. The aim is to create landscapes that are functional, visually appealing, and culturally meaningful. The study provides theoretical and practical guidance for other regions to integrate traditional cultural elements into landscape design.

Literature Review

Existing research has amply demonstrated that traditional cultural elements play a significant role in modern landscape design, not only enhancing cultural identity and aesthetic

value but also playing a positive role in promoting local tourism and economic development. These studies emphasize that cultural elements are not mere embellishments in landscape design but are expressions of deep-seated cultural heritage and local characteristics.

For example, Chen (2023) points out that the application of traditional cultural elements is not limited to the decorative level but can be integrated with traditional architecture, handicrafts, folk symbols, and other elements to promote the protection and inheritance of local cultural heritage. Chen emphasizes that the successful application of traditional cultural elements in modern landscape design not only strengthens the cultural identity of local residents but can also effectively attract tourists, thereby promoting local economic development. This perspective indicates that the integration of traditional culture with modern landscape design is a multi-layered process that requires innovative design aesthetics as well as respect and inheritance of cultural significance in terms of functionality. By incorporating these elements into landscape design, new vitality can be injected into modern design and contemporary significance can be given to local culture. (*Chen 2023*)

Li & Wang's research focuses on the uniqueness of traditional culture in Ningwu County in modern design, especially how these cultural elements reflect local characteristics in landscape design. They point out that traditional cultural elements of Ningwu County, such as ancient architectural styles and local folk activities, are not only important components of the region's cultural identity but also provide rich materials for landscape design. The application of these cultural elements in modern design not only preserves local historical memories but also adds unique regional and cultural depth to the design. Furthermore, Li & Wang emphasize that public participation is crucial in the inheritance of traditional cultural elements and the integration with modern design. Public participation not only helps designers better understand the intrinsic meaning of local culture but also enhances the social acceptability and cultural identity of design schemes through community interaction.

The study by Mankhatitham et al. (2023) further indicates that community engagement plays a significant role in enhancing cultural identity. Modern landscape design should not only consider aesthetics and functionality but also respect and integrate the core values of local culture during the design process. Through active community engagement and cultural identity, designers can find a balance between traditional culture and modern design, creating landscape works that are practical and can inherit and promote local culture. Therefore, the application of traditional cultural elements in design is not merely a nostalgia or retro for history, but rather, through innovative design techniques, these elements are transformed into cultural symbols with contemporary significance, thereby enhancing the appeal and uniqueness of the landscape. (*Mankhatitham & Butfang, 2023*)

In summary, existing research clearly shows that the application of traditional cultural elements in modern landscape design has significant cultural, social, and economic benefits. By combining local characteristics, public participation, and innovative design, traditional cultural elements can not only inject new vitality into modern landscapes but also promote the sustainable development of cultural heritage and local economies. These studies provide a solid theoretical foundation for this research, further confirming the important role of traditional culture in modern landscape design. (*Zhang, Y 2021*)

Research Methodology

The survey respondents totaled 208 people, with 103 males accounting for 49.52% and 105 females accounting for 50.48%; those under 18 years old numbered 19, making up 9.13%, while 18-30 years old numbered 112, accounting for 53.85%, 31-50 years old numbered 66, accounting for 31.73%, and over 50 years old numbered 11, accounting for 5.29%; students accounted for 28 people, or 13.46%, landscape designers 38 people, or 18.27%, cultural

researchers 32 people, or 15.38%, government officials 8 people, or 3.85%, and ordinary residents 102 people, or 49.04%; 188 people were local to Ningwu County, accounting for 90.38%, while 20 were not local, accounting for 9.62%; those with junior high school education or below numbered 16, accounting for 7.69%, high school 20, accounting for 9.62%, college 28, accounting for 13.46%, bachelor's degree 118, accounting for 56.73%, and graduate school or above 26, accounting for 12.5%.

From the survey results, it can be seen that Ningwu County residents' focus on the application of traditional cultural elements in landscape design is concentrated in several areas: 59.62% of respondents believe that the application of traditional cultural elements can enhance cultural identity, 54.33% believe these elements can enhance the aesthetic value of landscapes, and 57.21% believe that traditional cultural elements can attract tourists, which is particularly significant for the development of cultural tourism in Ningwu County. Additionally, 57.21% of respondents believe that the application of traditional cultural elements can enhance the uniqueness of landscape design, providing direction for creating landscapes with local characteristics. The survey also shows that landscape designers and government officials value the application of traditional cultural elements in landscape design more than other occupational groups, reflecting their expectations for cultural elements in practical operations. Local residents of Ningwu County have a stronger expectation for the application of traditional cultural elements in landscape design, indicating a stronger sense of local cultural identity. Furthermore, groups with higher education levels, especially those with graduate school or above, are more inclined to support the integration of traditional cultural elements into landscape design, suggesting that cultural literacy may affect the acceptance of these elements.

Most respondents have a high understanding of Ningwu County's traditional culture (75.4% indicate they are very or somewhat knowledgeable), and Sun, H., & Zhou, P. (2023) point out that "the relationship between landscape design and cultural identity is interactive, with landscape design reflecting and shaping cultural identity." In design, elements with local characteristics and a sense of cultural identity, such as the historical architectural styles of Ningwu County, traditional handicrafts, and symbols and patterns related to folklore, can be prioritized. 67.7% of respondents believe that traditional cultural elements are very or somewhat important in modern landscape design, so in design, elements that can enhance cultural identity, improve aesthetic value, attract tourists, and increase design uniqueness should be prioritized. (Liu, Q. 2020)

The application of traditional cultural elements in landscape design can be achieved through the following methods: Research by Mankhatitham and Butfang (2021) indicates that the interior spaces of old wooden row houses can be renovated to better meet the needs of the elderly. First, integrate traditional cultural elements into the spatial layout, for example, by drawing inspiration from the courtyard layout of traditional residential houses in Ningwu County, to create rest or activity areas in public spaces, making the design more in tune with local culture. In terms of plant selection, use local characteristic plants and combine them with traditional garden design techniques to create green spaces rich in cultural imagery. Traditional building materials, such as bricks, stones, and wood, can be combined with modern design languages to create landscape facilities with cultural depth, such as pavilions, paths, and walls. (Mankhatitham & Butfang, 2021)

To enhance cultural experiences, interactive elements can be added to the design. By setting up cultural display and experience areas to showcase Ningwu County's historical and cultural heritage, traditional crafts, and folk cultural activities, tourists and residents can gain a deeper understanding of the local cultural characteristics. With the help of modern technologies such as AR/VR, historical events or traditional festival scenes can be virtually recreated, enhancing the interactivity and fun of the landscape. In future designs, designers should

continue to explore Ningwu County's rich cultural resources, especially those elements that have not been widely applied, such as local folk tales and traditional farming culture, to inject new vitality into modern landscape design. At the same time, through community activities and public participation, encourage residents to participate in landscape design to ensure that the design meets the needs and cultural identity of local residents.

Overall, the modern landscape design of Ningwu County should respect and explore traditional culture, reasonably integrate modern design techniques, highlight cultural characteristics, while meeting the functional needs of modern life, to form a unique landscape style. The survey results indicate that traditional cultural elements not only have a broad public foundation in Ningwu County's landscape design but can also significantly enhance the cultural identity, aesthetic value, and tourism appeal of the landscape. In the future, landscape design should further explore and utilize local traditional cultural resources and combine modern design concepts and technologies to create a modern landscape with the characteristics of Ningwu County.

Research Results

From the survey results, respondents have a high expectation for the application of traditional cultural elements, with 50.48% being female, 53.85% of respondents aged 18-30, 90.38% being local residents of Ningwu County, and 73.56% expressing the expectation that traditional cultural aesthetics will be integrated into landscape design. Traditional Chinese culture emphasizes the harmony between nature and humanity, with 59.62% of respondents believing that cultural elements can enhance the cultural identity of landscapes, and 54.33% believing these elements can improve the aesthetic value of landscapes. By introducing traditional landscape elements and flower arrangements, the natural beauty is preserved while also enhancing the aesthetic value of landscape design. Additionally, traditional concepts such as "changing scenes with each step" and "borrowing scenery" can be applied to modern design to create rich spatial layers and visual appeal.

Conclusion and Discussion

The integration of traditional cultural elements into modern landscape design not only enhances cultural identity and design uniqueness but also promotes the inheritance of cultural heritage, strengthening social value and economic benefits. These elements enrich the design language and simultaneously drive sustainable development. The public's acceptance of traditional cultural elements is closely related to cultural identity, the visual aesthetics of design, functionality, and practical usage methods. Public participation and educational promotion play a significant role in enhancing identity. Ideal designs are often influenced by practical factors such as budget, site conditions, and technical levels during implementation, leading to differences between design and practical application. Moreover, the actual conditions of the transformation and maintenance management of cultural elements also affect the final outcome. Limitations in the geographical scope of the study, sample diversity, time span, the particularity of cultural backgrounds, the depth of quantitative analysis, and the examination of long-term effects restrict the universality and comprehensiveness of the research results. This study provides valuable insights into the application of traditional cultural elements in modern landscape design, especially in promoting cultural heritage and enhancing design uniqueness. However, the limitations identified in the study suggest that future research should expand the sample range, strengthen quantitative analysis, focus on long-term effects, and more comprehensively understand and apply the role of traditional cultural elements in different regional and contextual settings.



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