# Engaging the Youth in the Safeguarding and Promotion of Korean Intangible Cultural Heritage

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## Abstract

Engaging the youth in the safeguarding and promotion of intangible cultural heritage has been a priority for intangible cultural heritage experts in the Republic of South Korea. In the present research, I therefore seek to briefly examine the issue of youth engagement in Korean intangible cultural heritage system through the lens of critical theory of youth engagement. By examining current programs developed and implemented for, with and by the youth, I would like to identify the dynamics that inform the engagement of young people in the safeguarding and promotion of Korean intangible cultural heritage. Among many other things, I argue that, the youth-adult relationship significantly influences both the operation and outcome of the existing programs. And in a broader sense, such evolving relationship should be understood as manifestation of the symbolic dynamics currently informing the operation of intangible cultural heritage system in the Republic of South Korea as well as the expected outcomes of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding and promotion.

**Keywords: Youth engagement, Intangible cultural heritage, South Korea**

# Introduction

Recently, in an international scene, people have witnessed an increasing proliferation of programs designed and implemented with an aim to get young people more involved in the safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage. Organizations like UNESCO and European Union try hard to involve young professionals in their policy through countless world forums and joined projects with their State Members. In line with these attempts, cultural corporations like museums and heritage institutions in different countries are quite keen to involve youngsters as their audience and as participators.

What underlie the proliferation of these programs are arguably the simultaneous and interconnected shifts in both the scholarship of youth engagement and the field of intangible cultural heritage (ICH). Since the late 1980s, fueled by the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC), which describes the universal rights of the child, both in the developed and developing world, agencies and organizations working with youth have shifted their approach to youth engagement, from deficit-based programming into an asset-based or strength-based praxis. This initial and fundamental shift signals the rethinking of the role of young people in society.

In a similar vein, the concept of ICH has been constantly evolving for the last several decades. The most recent milestone witnessed by the international community is the promulgation of *the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* in 2003. The core discourse articulated through the 2003 Convention conceptualizes ICH as living heritage which has significant potential to serve the present and future development agendas of involving societies. Thus, instead of seeking to preserve "original" forms of ICH elements, the question regarding how to make ICH become closer and positively contribute to the daily life of people in our today's world has emerged as a central concern in academic discussion and safeguarding agenda (Kwon 2016). ICH safeguarding and promoting is moving beyond a merely governmental and scholarly affair and it is calling for the participation of people from all walks of life, including and especially young people.

Within this changing international context and tendency, the Republic of South Korea (hereafter referred to as Korea), as one of the most active and leading countries in the field of ICH, has definitely come up with its own responses. This present research, therefore, seeks to examine the way in which Korea has developed their ideas and practical models of youth engagement in ICH in line with international concepts and paradigms. The research firstly addresses the following fundamental questions: What specific youth engagement programs have been developed and implemented in Korea? What their nature, framework and mechanism are? And from this starting point, I move on to a more critical question as to what informs the nature, mechanism and framework of youth engagement in Korean ICH system?

To link the case of Korea with broader discussion of youth engagement and with a hope to construct a systematic study, I rely on the critical theory of youth engagement as the theoretical backbone of my research. The theoretical framework, as briefly described above, strongly emphasizes the relationship between youth and their counterparts as the most important factor determining the nature and outcome of youth engagement programs. It also highlights the active agency of youth and requires a careful consideration of how youth themselves perceive their role in the concerning programs and the value of such engagement.

The data for my research was obtained through participant observation of several cultural events, performances and workshops during my stay in Korea. These programs were mostly associated with some major institutions in the field of ICH, such as National Intangible Cultural Heritage Center (NIHC), Korea National University of Cultural Heritage (KNUCH) and National Folk Museum of Korea (NFMK). Data was also obtained from interviews with Korean ICH experts and young people who participated in relevant programs. Secondary information was collected through desk research from August to October 2019.

# Key Concepts and International Framework of Youth Engagement

## Competing definitions of youth: from passive actors to active agents in their own rights

In 1985, in preparation for the International Youth Year, the United Nations (U.N) defined "youth" as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. Since then, the definition has been widely adopted by many international organizations working for and with youth, such as Oxfam, UNICEF and UNESCO. However, as the U.N declared itself, this definition of youth is mainly used for statistical purposes and to ensure the consistency across countries and regions. In fact, the U.N's Member States, depending on the specific socio-cultural, institutional, economic and political factors, define youth very differently. In Korea, for instance, the Basic Law on Youth (1993) defines youth as people between the ages of 9 and 24; whereas, in Vietnam, the Youth Law (2005) defines youth as persons between 15 and 30.

The definition of youth as a specific age group is fundamental; yet, as the U.N has pointed out, it only entails a statistical meaning. What is covered by the term "youth" is far more complicated and has been central to countless academic and policy debates throughout the course of several decades. The early theories on youth developed in the beginning of the 20th century within the Western academia conceptualized youth as a period of transition, from "the pre-rationality of childhood and the rationality of adulthood" (Chisholm et al. 2011: 16). Normally described as an unstable and problematic life stage, this transition needs supervision, protection and guidance (Hall 1904). This strand of thought had informed the field of youth research and youth work in European and North American countries for a long period, resulting in the endurable treatment of youth as passive social actors. Consequently, for some time, their attempt to voice concerns about social, political and cultural issues (e.g. young activism in America in 1930s and 1960s) was framed as a "problem". The focus of youth-related services and research was to identify the "cause" of the problem and to correct the youth, reorienting them to a healthy transition into adulthood envisaged by adult experts (Flacks 2007: 60; Chisholm et al. 2011: 14; Erickson 2002: 10-11).

When moving to the end of the 20th century, however, new perspectives on youth started to emerge. Here, instead of working on behalf of youth, a manner that seemed to alienate and marginalize youth from society, scholars from different fields, such as anthropology, sociology and psychology, argued that more radical perspectives and practices

which "emphasize development, support and nurture" should be generated (Pittman 2000: 33). Others even go further, adopting the concept of "agency" from gender studies and postcolonial studies into the theorization of youth issues. For them, youth have agency, meaning that "they are and must be seen as active in the construction and determination of their own social lives, the lives of those around them and the societies in which they live" (Esser et al. 2016: 2). Youth, therefore, is not merely a phase in life or a transitional stage of becoming adults; they are agentic beings with their own capacities and possibilities.

From the academia circle, the paradigm shift in youth studies - from passive actors to active agents, from problem to possibility and from becoming to being - has also swept through the public life in many Western countries. The notion of "children and youth rights" has become central to public policy discourses and practices since the 1980s, especially thanks to the U.N's advocacy. The year of 1985, as mentioned previously, was chosen by the U.N as the first International Youth Year to express the acknowledgement of youth contribution to the development of the world. Four years later, on November 20, 1989, the U.N declared the Convention on the Rights of the Child[1], highlighting that children and youth not only have possibilities to act for their own but more importantly, they have the right to do so. The Convention also makes it clear that children are independent subjects and thereby making a strong, though very general, call for children's participation.

While advocating for the rights of children and youth and their collective agency as active decision makers, the U.N sustainably stresses the fact that youth is never a homogenous category. There is inherently diversity and fluidness entailed in the concept of youth. There are geographical, economic and cultural differences among young people throughout the world. The problems faced by youth are also diverse, including health issues, employment, social exclusion and poverty.

## Youth Engagement

The initial shift in thinking about youth, which was flued by international policy agendas, finally become the ground on which the new concept, be it youth engagement, has emerged and developed. For the last three decades, youth engagement has been attached to great importance; yet, within the evolving landscape of youth-related policy, youth work and youth research, there has not been any agreement upon the definition of this concept and it has been called many things over the years: youth leadership, civic engagement, youth participation, youth voice, to name but a few. And it means very different things to different people.

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1) By that definition, therefore, children are those persons under the age of 14. It is, however, worth noting that Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines 'children' as persons up to the age of 18. This was intentional, as it was hoped that the Convention would provide protection and rights to as large an age-group as possible and because there was no similar United Nations Convention on the Rights of Youth. https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/what-we-do/faq.html

**Box 1: Basic meaning of the word "engage" can be found in a Thesaurus**

A Thesaurus offers several synonyms for the verb "to engage" that help delineate different meanings attached to the term "youth engagement." Research associates all these forms of engagement with positive youth and community outcomes. To engage can mean:

*"to participate" in formal and informal activities (e.g. sports, arts, academics, a faith-based youth group, community service) through which we learn, grow and build positive relationships with people and places;*

*to be "engrossed in" or "captivated by" a pursuit (such as those listed above) to an extent that we are intrinsically motivated to continue to participate and work with others to learn and grow;*

*"to enlist" youth to help improve programs and policies that affect them (e.g. participate on a youth advisory board);*

*to collectively "grapple with" and "take on" issues of shared concern (e.g. develop and implement plans to reduce neighborhood violence, change school policy, or promote environmental sustainability).*

*Source:* Theresa K. Sullivan, Ed.D, 2011, *Youth Engagement: More than a method. A way of life for healthy youth and community development*, A white paper written for the University of Minnesota Extension, Center for Youth Development, p. 5

In his research entitled *Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*, Roger Hart argued that "participation in society begins from the moment a child enters the world and discovers the extent to which she is able to influence events by cries or movements…. And, through these early negotiations, even in infancy, children discover the extent to which their own voices influence the course of events in their lives" (Hart 1992: 4). However, by setting the focus of his research on "children" as defined by the U.N Convention on the Rights of the Child, Hart used the rights-based approach and defined participation as a "process of sharing decisions which affect one's life and the life of the community in which one lives" (Hart 1992: 5). Participation in this sense is "the means by which a democracy is built" and "the fundamental right of citizenship" (Hart 1992: 5).

Given the fact that Hart's research was published as early as in 1992 with the funding from the UNICEF and was directly connected to the U.N Convention on the Rights of the Child, it was "one of the first, if not the landmark typology for liking youth participation with the concept of children's rights" (Shaw-Raudoy & McGregor 2013: 394). The significance of youth engagement was pointed out by Hart as the follow:

*"Children need to learn that with the rights of citizenship come responsibilities. In order to learn these responsibilities, children need to engage in collaborative activities with other persons including those who are older and more experienced than themselves. It is for this reason that children's participation in community projects is so important." (Hart 1992: 7)*

Later in his work, Hart, using the metaphor of a ladder, identified different ways in which youth engagement could be hierarchically organized[2]. Basically, Hart's typology highlighted two dichotomies: non-participation and participation. A total of eight rungs were identified on the ladder. The lower three represented nonparticipation and the upper five represented increasing degrees of participation: assigned and informed; consulted and informed; adult-initiated; shared decisions with children; and children lead and initiate action; (Hart 1992: 1114). While the typology is hierarchical, Hart (1992) viewed participation as a continuum, arguing that "it is not necessary that children always operate on the highest possible rungs of the ladder…. The important principle again is one of choice: programs should be designed which maximize the opportunity for any child to choose to participate at the highest level of his ability (Hart 1992: 11).

The seminal work by Hart has inspired many other scholars, researchers and practitioners who work with young people in community-based projects. Rather than employing a rights-based approach, successive scholars have come up with a diversity of approaches and frameworks for youth engagement. In the U.S, for example, the Community Youth Development (CYD) use the developmental approach to engage youth in processes and practices associated with community development. Under the title *Toward a Shared Prosperity*, the framework developed by the CYD aims to create a "partnership for action" between youth and adults in order to make use of youth talents and increase their investment in community life" (Curnan & Della 2002:5).

In a similar vein, researchers from the University of Minnesota also emphasize the term "authentic relationship", in which youth and adults collectively sharing decision-making power and authority, as "a hallmark of youth engagement" (Saito & Sullivan 2011). And throughout decades, four different uses of the term "youth engagement" have been used in the country. They are visualized by these researchers as "Rings of Engagement", including Participation, Passion, Voice and Collective Action. While youth engagement is often thought of as a process of adults engaging youth, each of these rings involves youth and adults engaging with each other. They are linked at their core by ongoing, authentic youth/adult relationships.

In Canadian context, meaningful youth engagement is commonly defined as "the intentional establishment and support for the genuine involvement of young people in the design, creation, coordination, implementation, and evaluation of the processes, practices, and decisions that shape civic life" (Shaw 2012: 16). However, as pointed out by many scholars, the term "adult-youth partnerships" and the consequent model of capacity building for youth based on this concept, also tend to re-marginalize young people because it places youth and adults as binaries, while failing to acknowledge learning for the team. Therefore, they propose an alternative model called Transformational Learning Theory which emphasizes inclusive participation or learning partnerships with an emphasis on learning together, it could create the opening necessary for the complexity of youth's experiences and knowledge to become embedded with the experiences, knowledge, and understanding of adults involved in facilitating and supporting youth engagement processes (Shaw-Raudoy& McGregor 2013: 397).

As such, youth engagement can be understood differently by individuals and organizations. In fact, youth engagement takes place in different settings, ranging from families to schools and other public spaces. The most

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2) The ladder metaphor is borrowed from an article on adult participation, though new categories have been developed for Hart's essay (see Arnstein, S.R 1979, "Eight rungs on the ladder of citizen participation", Journal of the American Institute of Planners.

common feature has been pointed out by scholars when discussing the concept of youth engagement is that the term itself implies reconceptualization of youth-adult relationships. Other factors influence the nature of youth engagement include a welcoming and safe environment, and accurate mechanisms.

## Youth Engagement in ICH: UNESCO's conceptualization and framework

Following the leading discourse and agendas promoted by the U.N, international cultural heritage system, of which UNESCO is at the forefront, has witnessed a shift to a rights-based management approach. While paying considerable attention to technical matters of preserving cultural heritage, it is more frequently for people nowadays to discuss "the challenges and find ways to support people's right to access, enjoy and maintain cultural heritage" (Logan 2013a: 33).

Situated within this context, young people and their cultural rights have gained greater attention from UNESCO, which in fact was the first agency in the U.N system to develop a program for youth after the launching of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNESCO Executive Board 1999: paragraph 7). The pivotal role of youth in UNESCO agenda was clearly stated in an Intangible Heritage Messenger article

*entitled Introducing young people to Intangible Heritage:*
    *"UNESCO is making great efforts to promote the Intangible Heritage Convention in order to raise awareness of the existence and importance of intangible cultural heritage. This heritage can only be safeguarded if younger generations are sufficiently interested and motivated to carry on the traditions". (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Section: 2007)*

*Later, more detailed statements on youth and ICH were articulated by UNESCO in 2012:*
    *"Young people, constituting more than half of the world's population, are agents within their communities, who continue to recreate and revitalize their intangible cultural heritage. It is for them and the generations to come that intangible heritage should be safeguarded. This is even more relevant as youth in many countries are faced with limited educational and economic opportunities. Engaging actively in the safeguarding of their living heritage not only provides them with a medium to affirm their individual and group identities, which contributes to their overall well-being, but may also open new opportunities for their creative and economic development". (UNESCO 2012)*

In general, UNESCO emphasizes "a comprehensive and future-oriented vision recognizing youth as "agents of change, social transformation, peace, and sustainable development" (UNESCO 2014: 8). This vision informs the way UNESCO work, including that concerning ICH, is designed and implemented. It positions youth "as beneficiaries of services and activities; as independent actors; and as partners through their organizations" (UNESCO 2014: 8).

Given the fact that Education is the largest sector within UNESCO, it is unsurprisingly that UNESCO highly promotes the integration of ICH and education, especially when it comes to the consideration of youth. While UNESCO

constantly emphasizes the necessity of building up and strengthening partnership with youth (UNESCO 2012, 2014), experts and scholars have pointed out an "overtly top-down attitude of teaching children and youth how to think and behave in much of the UNESCO and related discourse" (Logan 2013b: 30). As explained by William Logan, "it is a fine balance, of course, between being patronizing and engaging with young people on their own term. Educators have a responsibility to introduce young people to their culture and the culture of others and foster sensibility towards the maintenance of cultural diversity, but it is also important that the voices of young people be heard and that they have opportunities to explain which elements of the past constitute significant heritage for them" (Logan 2013b: 30).

Throughout decades, UNESCO has developed various programs that aim to engage young people in the safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage. In coordination with UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet) established in 1953, UNESCO have led the World Heritage Education Program since 1994. Recently, ICH education has been also expanded through activities of ASPnet.  Also, through the establishment of Youth Forum in 1999, UNESCO have created a significant international platform for young people to express their voice and get engaged in issues important to their life. In 2017, for instance, a video-audio exhibition entitled *Tell Your Living Heritage Story* was organized at UNESCO Headquarter in Paris. The exhibition was created in collaboration with four passionate participants from the tenth UNESCO Youth Forum (25-26 October 2017, UNESCO Headquarters).

Apart from international programs, as an intergovernmental organization, UNESCO works closely in collaboration with its Member States to carry out programs and projects at regional, national and local levels. Many regional projects, therefore, have been done throughout the years. For example, in the year of 2012 alone, three important events were organized, including *Caribbean Youth Forum on ICH, Youth Forum in Central Africa: Awareness-rising on ICH,* and *The Role of Youth in the Safeguarding of ICH in South-Eastern Europe*. Most recently, UNESCO has teamed up with European Union for a two-year project entitled *2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage: Engaging Youth for an Inclusive and Sustainable Europe*. The aim of the project is to provide "an innovative approach to education by inviting teachers and learners to explore their living heritage and learn not only about it, but also with and through it. Moreover, the UNESCO-EU initiative will bring together young professionals working in the fields of tangible and intangible cultural heritage for a tailored regional training forum" (UNESCO n.d).

## Practices of Youth Engagement in Korean ICH System

The first section of this research paper has shown that youth itself is a shifting concept, thereby defined diversely. Since there has not been any agreed definition of youth, the consequent concept of youth engagement has also been understood and brought into action differently by organizations and individuals. When doing this research, I fully comprehended this complexity entailed in the subject-matter; however, my aim was not seeking to pick one among these understandings as a final and ultimate theoretical framework for my research. Rather, I would like to explore possible ways to understand the elaborations and synthesis between different theories and conceptual traditions as they

are embodied in the actual practices of Korean ICH system.

Moreover, it is important to make it clear that the inclusion of North American and European theorization of youth studies does not necessary mean my research represents a Western-centrism point of view. The absence of Korean conceptualization and theorization of youth and youth engagement mainly resulted from the inaccessibility to existing materials. The English version of Korean governmental bodies' websites, such as Ministry of Gender Equality and Family and Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, and other English sources made available by youth research institutions[3] and public media provide a useful glimpse into the current situation and interests in youth studies and youth affairs in Korea. Yet, not much indepth knowledge and theoretical understandings can be gained from these sources. The majority of important sources containing academic analyses and policy discourses on youth and youth engagement in Korea seems to exist only in Korean language. Given this fact, the possibility to produce accurate policy analyses was significantly limited due to my inability to understand Korean language.

To overcome this limitation, I would like to emphasize a scrutiny into actual practices of youth engagement in Korean ICH system. By situating this examination in broader international academic discussion and framework, I hope to understand not only the current status of Korea in international community but also an implicit assessment of the country's policy on youth and youth engagement in ICH.

A basic framework on youth and youth affairs in Korea is set forth by the Basic Law on Youth, which was promulgated in 1991 and came into effect on 1 January 1993. The Law defines youth as people between the ages of 9 and 24. Furthermore, the Law regulates youth policies and basic principles of youth development. Prescribed in the Youth Basic Law are the responsibilities and duties of the nation and society for youth development. The Law includes training of youth leaders, setting up of facilities, development and execution of programs, and establishment of a development fund, etc.

Later, in 2004, The Youth Activity Promotion Law was enacted on 9 February. The Law provides articles that actively promote various youth activities. The main contents of this law include:

• Establishing youth activity support centers in local areas
• Introducing the Youth Activity Program Accreditation to systematically manage and support activities
• Establishing a policy for international youth exchange activities and creating and manage youth encounter centers
• Encouraging personal experience such as cultural activities, club activities and volunteering.

In comparison to other fields of youth work, such as health care and employment, youth participation in cultural activities seems to be in a lower priority by government policy. Much of the information on the websites of concerning ministries, research institutions and public media has been focusing on the discussion of youth problems and difficulties (unemployment, insecurity wealth fare, runaway youth, etc.) and urging the government and authorized people to provide better protection for youth. There has been very limited discussion about the active role of young people in the safeguarding of ICH in these information channels.

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3) For instance, the National Youth Policy Institute: https://www.nypi.re.kr/archive/contents/siteMain.do?srch_mu_lang=ENG)

In the actual field of ICH, however, since its establishment dating back more than 50 years with the enactment of the Act for Cultural Property Preservation in 1962, the current system of ICH in Korea has experienced several transformations. The most recent milestone was marked by the promulgation of a new independent legal act specifically dealing with ICH, the Act on the Safeguarding and Promotion of Intangible Cultural Heritage, in 2015. As scholar Eun-jung Park put it insightfully, "the legislation of this new intangible heritage opens a new chapter in the history of ICH protection in the country" (Park 2019: 70).

The changes in the legal framework are indeed very complicated, and they are believed to be result and manifestation of a boarder shift/(re)orientation in ICH discourse and paradigm, which has been driven by both internal needs and outside influences. The transformative circumstances of the country, from postwar struggle to industrialization, modernization and the increasingly active relationship with UNESCO have informed much of the evolution of ways in which ICH is perceived as well as the measures through which it is protected. The linkage between ICH and national identity is still strongly emphasized; however, "the focus has been shifting to achieve a balance between preservation and utilization of ICH" (Park 2019: 70).

Informed by this evolution, current practices of ICH safeguarding and promoting in Korea have been significantly diversified. And, as Korea has gained the status of a worldwide leading country thanks to its active support and collaboration with UNESCO, it is unsurprisingly to notice the influence of UNESCO's conceptualization and framework on ICH practices in Korea, including those related to youth engagement. UNESCO-related organizations, such as Korean National Commission for UNESCO (KNCU), which was established in 1954, and International Information and Networking Centre for ICH in the Asia-Pacific Region (ICHCAP), which was launched in 2011 as a category 2 center under the auspice of UNESCO, have actively worked to bring UNESCO ideology and framework into action in national and regional levels. For instance, since 2010, KNCU has been carrying out the Rainbow Youth Global Citizen Project in order to support ASPnet activities. The project aims to cultivate young global citizens who will lead the way to a peaceful and sustainable future. It is a yearlong program that provides students with opportunities to carry out projects and campaigns to address seven topics (representing the seven colors of the rainbow): peace, human rights, environment, globalization, local culture, cultural diversity, and economic justice. The number of schools involved has increased each year and 60 projects were supported in 2014 (KNCU 2015:30). In a similar vein, ICHCAP has held many regional meetings and projects aiming to get young people more involved in the safeguarding and promotion of ICH. In 2016, for instance, ICHCAP organized a youth video production project entitled Youth meets ICH, which was designed to raise youth awareness of ICH and encourage their participation in ICH safeguarding through interviews with ICH bearers/experts. The videos resulted from the project are showcased on ICHCAP's website. In 2017, in collaboration with Bureau of Cultural and Historical Preservation (BCHP) under the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs, Republic of Palau, ICHCAP organized a Sub-Regional Meeting for ICH Safeguarding in the Pacific. The theme of the meeting was *Youth as Safeguarding Actors for Pacific ICH.* More recently, another ICHCAP's project *entitled Asia-Pacific Youth ICH Storytelling Contest* is now underway. ICHCAP's work has been a significant channel to integrate Korean practice into a broader regional context.

The encounter with international framework embodied in UNESCO programs has been obvious in Korean ICH system. However, like elsewhere in the world, distinctive national and local practices have been generated and

developed in Korea. In the section that follows, there will be a closer look into the ways in which Korean organizations seek to engage young people in the ICH system. Given the fact that youth is a very diverse group, my examination focused mainly on three sub-groups of primary stakeholders in ICH system, namely practitioners, professionals and audiences. Admittedly, one of the limitations of this research is that it could not cover all programs have been conducting in Korea. Rather than local programs and those belong to NGO sector, only example initiatives done by national institutions were be placed under the examination. This limitation also implies that geographic, social and economic differences among youth were not be closely analyzed.

## Youth as ICH practitioners

The focus on people who directly hold knowledge about and practice ICH elements has been crucial in Korean ICH system. The designation of "ICH holders" known as Living Human Treasure alongside with that of ICH elements is a defining feature of the current ICH system. More importantly, for certificated ICH holders, transmission of their skill and knowledge to the next generation of practitioners is an obligation. An ICH transmission system, therefore, has been established in Korea since 1962 and a nationwide network of inheritance centers has been built up since 1974. By 2019, there are 153 such centers in Korea, providing "preservation space for holders, an educational place for successors and a social education center for residents" (NIHC n.d.).

The inheritance system is not set up with a primary focus on youth. However, the establishment of inheritance centers has proved to be quite useful for presenting ICH elements and holders to the new public, therefore contributing in search of potential successors (Bak 2004:162; Kim et al. 2012: 89). In recent years, when the aging of ICH holders has become a critical issue in Korea ICH transmission system, finding new and younger generation of practitioners has been accelerated. In accordance with the new law on ICH in 2015, ICH transmission has been integrated into public education system through eligible university(ies) and high school(s) (Article 30). Therefore, students who want to become ICH successors can go to the appointed university and take lessons. After completing a three semester training course, students become qualified and take a national exam. After successfully passing the screening process, they can become graduate students (Cha 2017: 239).

In addition to training provided by inheritance centers, young people who would like to be professional practitioners are encouraged to take part in degreed courses at relevant universities. In the field of Korean traditional arts, for instance, the Korea National University of the Arts (K-Arts) is a well-known training institution.

**Box 2: Learning traditional arts at K-Arts**

[The] yeonhui program is receiving interest from young performers well positioned to become the next generation of traditional performance leaders, and although K-Arts only opened in 1990, it has already become one of the top choice schools for young artists. During the audition cycle beginning in 2011, there were over fifty applicants for just fifteen student spots in the yeonhui program. Most applicants sought to pursue drumming, but four prospective students applied for mask dance drama and two were admitted. K-Arts' mask dance drama major is focused on Bongsan Talchum, Yangju Byeolsandae, and Goseong Ogwangdae, representing three major types of mask dance drama. The K-Arts program also gives students practice in fusion performance and knowledge of the theory and history of Korean performing arts.

Source: Cedar Bough T. Saeji, 2015, "Protection and Transmission of Korean Folk Theatre", *Yeonhui: Korean Performing Arts. Korean Musicology Series No. 7*, Seoul: National Gugak Center, p. 251

In 2000, the National University of Cultural Heritage was established under the Korean Cultural Heritage Administration. Apart from being an eligible university for providing credited training for students of inheritance centers, the university offers the first graduate major in traditional arts and crafts in Korea.

Although, young people who graduate from ICH-related universities are not recognized as ICH holders as framed by Korean law and regulations, the emergence of higher education system of ICH has helped enlarge the path to become ICH practitioners for those who would like to do so. It is also a significant step towards fostering professional knowledge for the future ICH practitioners.

## Youth as ICH professionals

### 1) Higher Education

In Korean ICH system, professionals like researchers, administrators, and managers play a significant role as people who identify ICH elements, evaluate the designation and monitor the transmission process, etc. Given the interdisciplinary nature of ICH as an academic field, professionals in Korea can be trained in many different universities, majoring in various fields of studies. In fact, as pointed out by UNESCO experts, "professionals in the cultural heritage sector often received their training from programs that emphasize the management of tangible heritage (conservation, architecture and archaeology) rather than intangible heritage" (CRIHAP n.d). Even more so, in recent year, the number of ICH researchers in Korea tends to decrease, leading to the shortage of specialists qualified for monitoring and evaluating the transmission process[4].

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4) Personal interview with a researcher at NICH, November 2019

In light of this, attempts have been made in order to develop and nurture a new generation of young professionals. In 2000, the establishment of Korea National University of Cultural Heritage (KNUCH) and its affiliated research centers and education facilities marked a significant move towards this end. Recently, KNUCH provides both undergraduate (seven departments with an entrance quota of 140 students) and graduate (five departments with an entrance quota of 100 students) programs. These programs at KNUCH cover diverse aspects of cultural heritage such as excavation, preservation, restoration and management of cultural heritage as well as to utilize them for recreation of cultural contents. Education at KNUCH is described as focusing on practical experience and on-site knowledge. It is also carried out in a way that satisfies demands from the field by expanding the proportion of field practice, inviting professionals from the field to offer lectures, and introducing mandatory field experience courses.

To encourage young people to attend the university, KNUCH provides a wide range of scholarship, including scholarship for High Achievement on the Entrance Exam, Scholarship for Nurturing Future Experts, Scholarship for Those of National Merit and Their Families, Scholarship for Those Promoting the Prestige of NUCH, Buddy Scholarship, Volunteer Scholarship, Outstanding Language Proficiency Scholarship, Scholarship for Contest Winners, Overseas Language Training Scholarship, Exchange Student Scholarship, Family Scholarship, etc.

As of September 2016, 695 students had graduated from KNUCH, including 560 undergraduates and 150 graduates.

### 2) Supporting Expert Networks

In September 2018, the Asia-Pacific Higher Education Network for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage (APHEN-ICH) was established in cooperation with ICHCAP and UNESCO. As of 2019, there are 17 member universities including Korea National University of Cultural Heritage (KNUCH), Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Kyoto University, Thammasat University in Thailand and Beijing Normal University in China.

In August 2019, the APHEN-ICH organized the first field school for young researchers at KNUCH. The event was participated by 19 international and 7 local participants.

## Youth as Audience

Programs aiming to introduce ICH to young people as audience have been at the central focus of many Korean ICH organizations. Some of the main projects carried out by major national institutions are as follow:

### 1) National Intangible Cultural Heritage Center (NIHC)

National Intangible Cultural Heritage Center (NIHC) was officially founded in October 2014 under Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea (CHA) and was located in the city of Jeonju. Since the establishment, NIHC has embraced a wide range of activities, from holding ICH exhibition/performances, education programs for ICH holders and general public to domestic and international exchange (Kim n.d). Throughout all of these diverse activities, young people have always been a target group for NIHC. Several programs have been developed and implemented in order to provide easy access to ICH and introduce them to this special social group.

### a. ICH Experience Education

The ICH experience education program is specialized for elementary and middle school students and it has been implemented since the establishment of NIHC. The total budget allocated to this program is  160 million/year. The program begins in March or April, every year when the new semester starts, and extend to about 8 months, until November. The NIHC staff who manages experience education selects a specific genre or element of ICH and then assigns a practitioner of the element as the instructor. Instructors are selected among the practitioners of about twenty national intangible cultural properties. While practitioners are experts in relevant fields, they are not skilled at teaching. Therefore, to help them develop teaching skills, NIHC launched an ICH teaching skill enhancement program. Graduates of the course can work as instructors.

For instance, practitioners who completed the program in 2018 are given a chance to teach for the center's 2019 program. NIHC is now seeking ways to offer graduates a chance to teach as after-school instructors at elementary and middle schools in cooperation with city and provincial education offices across the country.

For each year, there are around 160 classes with 4000 participants (25 per round). The application for the program is made through phone calls. And the course is almost free of charge, except for a small amount of money ( 10.000) to be paid for materials in crafting classes.

### Table 1: Elements for NIHC's Education Program (2019)

| No. | Category | Element |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Rituals, Ceremonies | National ICH No.85 Seokjeondaeje |
| 2 | Rituals, Ceremonies | National ICH No.104 Seoul Saenamgut |
| 3 | Traditional Performance and Arts | National ICH No.1 Jongmyo Jeryeak |
| 4 | Traditional Performance and Arts | National ICH No.5 Pansori |
| 5 | Traditional Performance and Arts | National ICH No.29 Seodosori |
| 6 | Traditional Performance and Arts | National ICH No.49 Songpa Sandaenori |
| 7 | Traditional Performance and Arts | National ICH No.57 Gyeonggi Minyo |
| 8 | Traditional Performance and Arts | National ICH No.73 Gasan Ogwangdae |
| 9 | Traditional Performance and Arts | National ICH No.23 Gayageum Sanjo and Byeongchang |
| 10 | Traditional Performance and Arts | National ICH No.11-2 Pyeongtaek Nongak |
| 11 | Traditional Performance and Arts | National ICH No.6 Tongyeong Ogwangdae |
| 12 | Traditional Performance and Arts | National ICH No.34 Gangnyeong Talchum |
| 13 | Traditional Performance and Arts | National ICH No.11-5 Imsilpilbong Nongang |
| 14 | Traditional Performance and Arts | National ICH No.40 Hagyeonhwadae Hapseolmu |
| 15 | Traditional Performance and Arts | National ICH No.12 Jinju Geommu |
| 16 | Traditional Games and Martial Arts | National ICH No.3 Namsadang Nori |

| 17 | Traditional Games and Martial Arts | National ICH No.13 Gangneung Danoje |
|---|---|---|
| 18 | Traditional Games and Martial Arts | National ICH No.76 Taekkyeon |
| 19 | Traditional Skills | National ICH No.28 Naju Saetgollai |
| 20 | Traditional Skills | National ICH No.48 Dancheongjang |
| 21 | Traditional Skills | National ICH No.118 Bulhwajang |
| 22 | Traditional Skills | National ICH No.119 Geumbakjang |

(Source: Lim Seung Bum (2019), "ICH Youth Education: Operation and Case Study  Study of the Korean National Intangible Cultural Heritage", in Regional Meeting for Strengthening the Use of ICH in Education in the Asia-Pacific, ICHCAP and UNESCO Bangkok Office, p: 132)

**b. ICH Career Exploration Camp**

The ICH career exploration camp is held for one night or two nights with the goal of providing students with hands-on experience about ICH and introducing ICH-related careers. Most of the participants are young students aged around 15. Every year, CHA allocates KWR 200 million to NHIC to conduct this program.

In the camp, students attend basic learning classes about three to four ICH elements. Then, they can attend an in-depth class by selecting one of the elements. The camp also provides featured programs, such as mission games and puzzles about ICH, to arouse their interest in ICH.

In addition, there is a field trip to cultural heritage sites in Jeonju where NIHC is located. The students can visit, for example, Gyeonggijeon Shrine and Jeondong Cathedral in the Jeonju Hanok Village and catch fish in Jeonju Stream.

On the last day of the camp, the students demonstrate the ICH that they have learned. For example, students who have learned taekkyeon (a traditional Korean martial art) perform it in front of other students. Those who have learned a mask or sword dance present a short performance of the dance. There is also an exhibition of simple artworks or handicrafts made by students in the camp.

Like the ICH Experience Education program, the Career Exploration Camp is also free of charge; however, the actual expense (around  90.000), including material and meal is paid by participants.

**Table 2: 2019 Program Schedule for ICH Career Exploration Camp**

| Schedule | Participants | Target | Participating School/Group | Note |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.15 (Wed)-5.16 (Thu), one night | 37 | High school | Hamyang Anui High School | |
| 6.10 (Mon) – 6.12 (Wed), two nights | 27 | High school | Jeonju Arts High School | |
| 9.30 (Mon) – 10.2 (Wed), two nights | Approx. 30 | Middle High School | Jeonju Yaho School (Jeonju City, Education Youth Dept.) | |
| 10.21 (Mon) – 10.23 (Wed), two nights | 31 | Primary school | Sinan Jaeun Elementary School | To be held at transmission education center |

| 11.12 (Tue) – 11.14 (Thu), two nights | 35 | Primary School | Sinan Bigeum Elementary School | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 160 | | | |

Source: Lim Seung Bum (2019), "ICH Youth Education: Operation and Case Study  Study of the Korean National Intangible Cultural Heritage", in Regional Meeting for Strengthening the Use of ICH in Education in the Asia-Pacific, ICHCAP and UNESCO Bangkok Office, p: 134)

## 2) National Folk Museum of Korea

The National Folk Museum of Korea (NFMK) is the largest ethnographic museum in the country. Within the NFMK, the Children's Museum is specialized for introducing Korean folk culture to children and youth. Of all 30 education programs run by NFMK in 2018, 17 were devoted to youth.

| No. | Program titles | Details | Audience | No. of Sessions | No. of Audiences |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Courses for Undergraduates who want to be a curator | Folk Culture Advance Course | College and University Students | 5 | 175 |
| 2 | Volunteer Training Advanced Course | Folk Culture Advance Course | College and University Students | 6 | 372 |
| 3 | Dream about Your Future at the Museum | Exploring Careers Program | Middle School Students | 14 | 371 |
| 4 | Museum Mentor School | Exploring Careers Program | High School Students | 2 | 41 |
| 5 | 1318 Secret Door to the Museum | Exploring Careers Program | Youths | 5 | 56 |
| 6 | Meeting the Story of Ssijul and Naljul in the Museum | Folk Culture Hands-on Course | Youths | 4 | 105 |
| 7 | Meeting Asian Kitchen | Folk Culture Hands-on Course | Youths | 5 | 92 |
| 8 | Succeed in Museum | Folk Culture Hands-on Course | Youths | 1 | 15 |
| 9 | Treasure Hunt at the Museum | Outdoor Exhibition-related program | Youths | 5 | 100 |
| 10 | The Museum in My Hand | Permanent Exhibition-related program | Youths | 5 | 638 |
| 11 | Summer Vacation at the Museum | Special Exhibition-related Program | Youths | 10 | 172 |
| 12 | Museum Time Machine (Supply Type) | Permanent Exhibition-related Program | Youths | 25 | 3384 |
| 13 | Museum Time Machine (Lecture Type) | Permanent Exhibition-related Program | Youths | 13 | 1713 |
| 14 | Museum Encountering with Schools | Onsite Visiting Program | Middle School Students | 16 | 260 |
| 15 | Museum Walk for High School Examinee | Education Program for High School Examinee | High School Examinee | 4 | 603 |

| 16 | Education for the visual-impaired (Braille Chart and Korean Folk Character Painting) | Folk Culture Hands-on Course through Tactile Sense and Physical Activities | Organization of Disable Youths | 5 | 52 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | Special Activities for Disability Awareness Month | Art Therapy Course Themed on Rites of Passage | Special Classes at Middle and High Schools | 1 | 3073 |
| Total | | | | 126 | 11.222 |

(Source: National Folk Museum of Korea, 2019, Annual Report: National Folk Museum of Korea 2018, p. 25)

### 3) Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA)

As the governmental agency in charge of cultural heritage, Korean Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA) is actively works to engage young people in the country's ICH system. The Cultural Heritage Education Promotion Program has been run by CHA since 2006 and experienced many transformations. The concept of cultural heritage education program is described as "educational, investigative and experience activities that allow the people, including the youth, to develop their creativity and personality through a better understanding of cultural heritage" (Kim 2019:164). The program is operated through cooperation between public and private organizations. The program activities include visiting education (experts come to schools to teach cultural heritage), archeological class (education is provided in archeological sites where cultural heritage was discovered) and support for pilot operation schools (several elementary/middle/high schools are selected and granted support to generate best examples for cultural heritage education).

Most recently, in 2018, to reflect on the new changing context, especially the newly promulgated Act on ICH, CHA adopted a new perspective about cultural heritage education. As a result, the local cultural heritage education came into its existence. The objectives of the new model are to "pursue cultural heritage education based on communities and to embrace the concepts of cultural rights and cultural diversity" (Kim 2019: 167). The budget allocated to this project is KRW 2.64 billion and the number of local governments participated in is 55. Activities of the project include the instruction of professional practitioners at schools, field visits and comprehensive hands-on experience in class and at transmission centers.

## For youth, with youth and by youth: outcomes and limitations of youth engagement in Korean ICH system

Throughout the analyses of programs and projects conducted with an aim to bring the youth closer to the ICH system in Korea, we can obviously notice a future-oriented approach. The existing programs are mainly designed to help young people to better play their role as future practitioners, experts and participants in the ICH field. "Children at the age of 10-15 normally know nothing about ICH so that we have to teach them", this statement was made by an ICH

expert whom I interviewed during my research. Her way of thinking about youth seems to echo many others in Korea. Thus, ICH education has become the most popular method used to engage the youth in the concerning field. This fact is understandable, as we can see that UNESCO itself also strongly emphasizes the pivotal role of ICH education for young people.

The increasing number of participants in ICH education programs is evidential for their effectiveness. The Career Exploration Camp by NIHC is so popular that the booking is normally full after 3-4 minutes and every year the applications are always multiple times higher than the number NIHC can select. The students who attend the program also present positive changes. As shared by a NIHC expert, many students, who might have been forced to participate in the camp by their teachers or parents, eventually find themselves immersed in the activities and practicing what they have learned all night. After the camp is over, 60% of the students say they want to join the camp againlearned all night. After the camp is over, 60% of the students say they want to join the camp againlearned all night. After the camp is over, 60% of the students say they want to join the camp again[5].

Being able to freely and easily access to a wide range of ICH elements is crucial for youth as it help fulfil their cultural right, bringing them enjoyment, appreciation of ICH and even influencing their career path. The transformation from passive audience to active practitioners and professionals will take a long way and demand countless efforts; yet, the current system in Korea proves to be rightly effective to a certain extent.
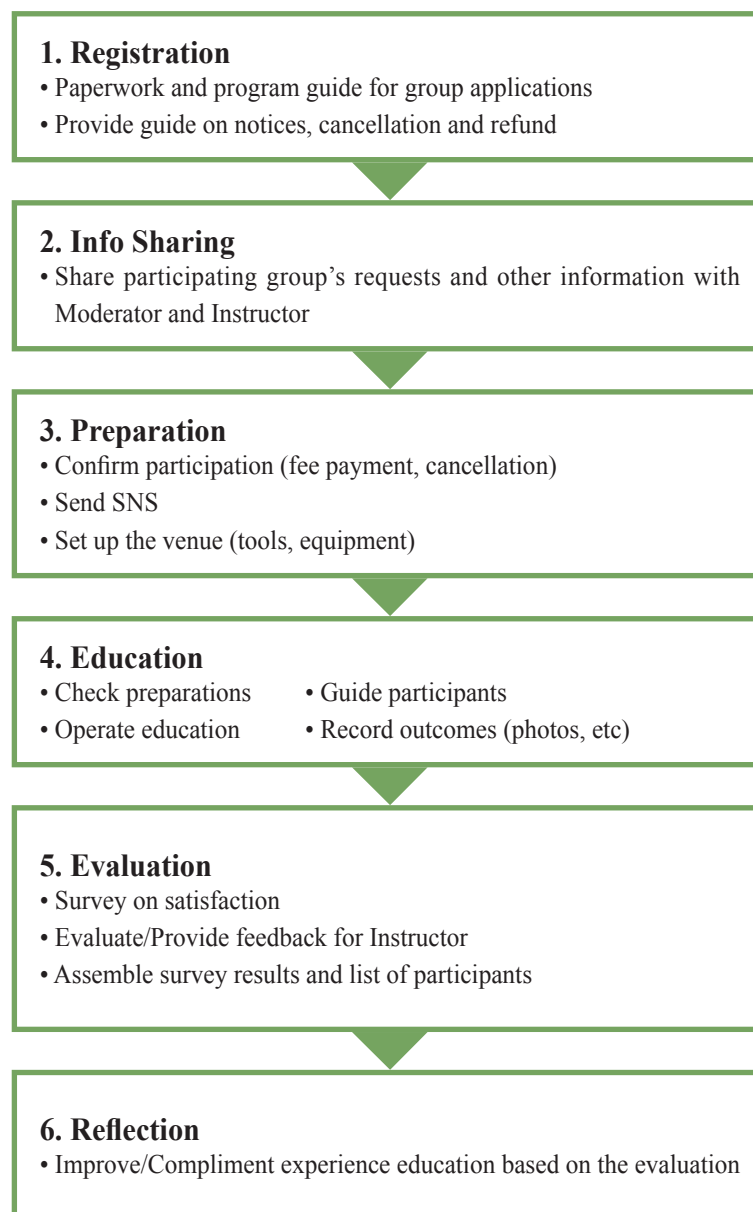
However, taking about youth engagement does not merely mean presenting the youth within the field of ICH. Their ideas and active contribution to the designing, implementation and evaluation of programs and projects really matter to the conceptualization of youth engagement. In fact, most of programs in Korea thus far have been designed for youth rather than being with youth and by youth. Some programs, such as the ICH Exploration Camp have certain section(s) in which young participants themselves can develop their own projects/performances, meaning that they can actively interpret and present their understanding of taught ICH elements. The results of these final showcases are quite impressive, as shared by an expert from NIHC. In a performance, the students even mixed the sword dance with K-pop dance steps to form a fusion of traditional and modern elements.

Other than these minor projects, youth mostly follow the instruction given to them by program organizers. Their feedback after participation is collected and is used to modify the content of the program when needed. However, in general, youth do not actively work with ICH experts as their partners in developing the activities that would affect them. The diagram below show a typical process of implementing youth-related projects done by NIHC. Similar models are used by other organizations as well.

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5) Personal interview with NIHC expert, October 2019

**Figure 1: Implementation process of ICH education program at NIHC.**

**1. Registration**
• Paperwork and program guide for group applications
• Provide guide on notices, cancellation and refund

**2. Info Sharing**
• Share participating group's requests and other information with Moderator and Instructor

**3. Preparation**
• Confirm participation (fee payment, cancellation)
• Send SNS
• Set up the venue (tools, equipment)

**4. Education**
• Check preparations     • Guide participants
• Operate education      • Record outcomes (photos, etc)

**5. Evaluation**
• Survey on satisfaction
• Evaluate/Provide feedback for Instructor
• Assemble survey results and list of participants

**6. Reflection**
• Improve/Compliment experience education based on the evaluation

(Source: Lim Seung Bum (2019), "ICH Youth Education: Operation and Case Study  Study of the Korean National Intangible Cultural Heritage", in Regional Meeting for Strengthening the Use of ICH in Education in the Asia-Pacific, ICHCAP and UNESCO Bangkok Office, p: 133)

As youth are normally considered audience rather than active participants, they sometimes feel difficult to connect to ICH elements. Many have shared that they are not interested in Korean traditional theatre because the content and language present in these forms of arts are too rooted in the past. In this case, it would be more appealing for young people to take part in learning about traditional theatre if they are given opportunities to interpret the content in their own ways and to make an art form of the past more related to their daily life in the present time (Yim 2004).

# Conclusion

Although there is not any government policy specifically dealing with the issue of youth engagement in ICH, the huge amount of funding allocated to youth-related programs can be considered a significant policy implication. Youth engagement in Korean ICH reflects the status of the country in an international scene, especially its alignment with UNESCO's ideology and framework.

Among available channels, education is central to engaging the youth in the system of ICH in Korea. Teaching youngsters about ICH elements, rising their awareness and improving their appreciation of Korean cultural are emphasized strongly by adult experts. As a consequence of this model, there has not been much discussion on what adults can learn from youngsters during the time working with them. Moreover, while trying to transform young people to become active agents acting for ICH, experts seems to neglect the fact that young people's heritage should also be protected and promoted as well. In the upcoming time, therefore, the role of young people as primary partners of adult experts hopefully will be truly realized.

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# 무형유산 분야 청년 참여
## : 한국의 사례를 중심으로

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### 요약

한국의 무형유산 전문가들은 무형유산 보호와 활성화에 있어 청년의 참여를 중요하게 생각해왔다. 이에, 본 연구는 청년 참여에 관한 비판이론을 통해 한국 무형유산 분야의 청년 참여에 대해 살펴보고자 한다. 청년을 위해, 청년에 의해, 청년과 함께 개발 및 시행되고 있는 프로그램들을 검토하면서 한국 무형유산 보호와 활성화에 있어 청년 참여에 영향을 미치는 요인들을 확인하고자 한다. 여러 요인들 가운데 청년−성인 관계는 프로그램의 운영과 결과에 큰 영향을 미친다는 것을 알 수 있다. 또한 보다 광범위한 의미에서, 청년−성인 관계는 한국 무형유산 제도의 운영은 물론, 무형유산 보호·활성화 노력의 결과에 영향을 미칠 수 있는 요인으로 이해해야 할 것이다.

**핵심 주제어**

청년 참여, 무형유산, 한국