

# Path Exploration of How Photo Archives Enrich the Cultural Educational in Colleges and Universities

Shuangxia Xuan

Anhui University of Finance and Economics, Bengbu 233030, China

---

**Abstract:** Photo archives are an important component of cultural resources in colleges and universities, serve as a significant medium for campus cultural transmission, possess unique cultural education functions. Fully utilizing the cultural education power of photo archives is of great significance for colleges and universities, to improve the quality of education and implement the fundamental task of moral education. Based on a multidimensional analysis of the characteristics and research status of photo archive resources in colleges and universities, this paper elucidates the significance of enabling cultural education in colleges and universities through photo archives, explores the implementation approaches for empowering cultural education through photo archives, and provide guidance and reference for innovative cultural education paths in colleges and universities.

**Keywords:** Photo Archives, Colleges and Universities, Cultural Education.

---

## 1. Introduction

Photo archives in colleges and universities are historical evidence and basis for recording the development process and various activities of the school. They can restore the scenes of historical events, presenting vivid, visual, and intuitive characteristics. Compared to other cultural communication mediums, photo archives have a more direct narrative expression and dissemination ability. They possess unique value in inheriting the historical culture of colleges and universities. Integrating photo archive resources into cultural education work, enriches the cultural education resources of colleges and universities, innovates cultural education paths, and better implements the fundamental task of moral education.

## 2. Characteristics and Research Status of Photo Archives

As an important component of university archives, photo archives record the images or moments of events in a special carrier, which can present history more vividly and with a sense of the times[1]. In the past 200 years, photos have undergone an upgrade from film to digital, and the carrier of photo archives has gradually become mainly digital photos. Traditional collection photo archives have also been continuously transformed into digital forms. For example, the China Photo Archives has basically completed the digital processing of physical archives and stored them all in data management systems[2].

### 2.1. Characteristics of Photo Archives

Photo archives are characterized by their authenticity, visual imagery, and vivid expression. From the source perspective, the images recorded in photo archives are real, and the instantaneous nature of photography determines the originality of photo archives. "I can never deny that what is in the photo once existed." [3] The elements reflected in photo archives, such as time, place, environment, and people, contain rich information and are presented in vivid images, providing a more intuitive narrative expression and dissemination ability, offering information recipients a clear

and visual experience.

### 2.2. Research Status of Photo Archives

Photo archive research is an important means of collecting, screening, processing, and providing utilization of photo archives based on specific themes, with the collection of photo archive resources as the research object. Photo archive research is aimed at providing high-quality photo utilization services, and its value can only be realized through utilization.

In the past, photo archives were often regarded as a special carrier of archives, neglecting the deep meaning contained in the photos, which greatly limited the research efforts on photo archives[4]. Existing photo archive research mainly revolves around using photos as "supporting evidence for text," focusing on traditional photo compilation and exhibition publications, and lacks in-depth exploration and innovative research on photo content. The collection, organization, preservation, and identification of photo archives directly affect the development of archive research. Some unfavorable factors include poor collection, archiving, and management processes of some photo archives, damage to old photos due to improper management, and inadequate digital verification of archive collections, misleading researchers.

However, with the development of modern digital technology and the exploration of related theoretical practices, the composition of photo archives in colleges and universities has changed. The management methods of photo archives have improved, and the forms of photo archive achievements have expanded, laying the foundation for innovative research and utilization of photo archives. With the continuous improvement of digital technology, intelligent management, and systematic construction of photo archives, more and more colleges and universities are conducting research on photo archives, and the utilization of photo archives is gradually becoming diversified.

## 3. The Significance of Photo Archives in Enriching the Cultural Education in Colleges and Universities

Cultural education in colleges and universities refers to the comprehensive cultivation of students' thoughts, knowledge,

and physical and mental aspects through various educational methods and cultural activities. Enriching cultural education in colleges and universities through photo archives, aims to utilize the resources of photo archives as a basis. By researching and compiling photographic archives, it seeks to uncover the rich stories contained within the photos. This allows hidden, undeveloped, and inexpressible development process of the university to reappear for students. Students can immerse themselves in the excellent traditions and spiritual connotations of the school, stimulating their self-cultural cultivation and fostering a sense of identity and belonging.

### **3.1. Photo Archives Inherit College Historical Culture Vividly and Directly**

Photo archives in colleges and universities directly record major events, significant incidents, and important figures, making them important resources for humanistic education. Photo archives not only preserve the true state of each historical moment but also "reconstruct" the process of the school's development. This historical perception method, which transcends language barriers, is concise, clear, vivid, and appealing, making it easy for teachers and students to understand and accept. It can effectively enhance their sense of belonging and identity, and strengthen the dissemination and inheritance of college culture.

### **3.2. Photo Archives Subtly Inspire Teachers and Students to Cultivate a New Spiritual Culture**

Due to their visual, original, and vivid characteristics, photo archives in colleges and universities possess strong on-site infectiousness and realistic appeal, subtly inspiring patriotic and school-loving emotions of teachers and students. Photo archives can transform the traditional indoctrination education methods into a humanistic environment with subtle influence, allowing teachers and students to be immersed in a campus atmosphere rich in cultural influences. Not only does it disseminate the historical culture of the university, but it also inspires the generation of a new spiritual culture among teachers and students, continuously enriching cultural resources of Colleges and Universities .

### **3.3. Photo Archives Provide Unique Historical Resources for Cultural Education in Colleges and Universities**

Photo archives themselves are an important carrier of college historical culture and a vital part of school history resources. By fully tapping into the historical resources contained in photo archives and transforming them into cultural education materials, students can be immersed in a cultural environment of "school history education" . They can fully perceive the splendid historical moments of the school, develop a sense of cultural identity and life experience. This actively guides students to emulate good cultural qualities and shape correct values, life perspectives, and worldviews.

## **4. Exploring the Pathways of Enriching Cultural Education in Colleges and Universities through Photo Archives.**

### **4.1. Strengthening the Utilization of Existing Resources and Promoting the Construction of Photo Archive Exhibitions**

Cultural exhibition halls serve as important platforms for showcasing the history and culture of universities. The most direct way for photo archives to enrich cultural education is to build photo archives exhibition halls. By organizing the photo archives based on the timeline or historical development reflected in the photos, and providing descriptions of historical events, relevant figures, and cultural activities, the photo archives can be comprehensively displayed using new multimedia techniques such as scene reconstruction and audio-visual effects. This enriches the knowledge value and cultural significance of the exhibition halls. Opening the exhibition halls to students for visits helps achieve the goal of enriching the cultivation of campus culture through photo archives.

### **4.2. Innovating the Forms of Theme Activities to Drive Cultural Education Practices with Photo Archives**

Utilizing the existing photo archive resources, diverse and content-rich cultural activities related to photo archives can be organized. Continuous efforts should be made to expand and innovate the forms of activities. Continuous efforts should be made to expand and innovate the forms of activities, such as conducting "stories behind the photos" submission activities, "picture storytelling" speech competitions, and producing short videos, school promotional videos, and historical videos based on photo archives. By regularly collecting student activity photos, colleges and universities can enrich their photo archive resources, increase student engagement, and enable students to understand the school and experience campus culture through filming experiences. By utilizing various theme activities, the educational resources contained in photo archives can be fully showcased, achieving the goal of cultural education through photo archives. This also encourages students to actively participate in cultural education activities and receive independent cultural influence from the photo archives.

### **4.3. Expanding the Influence of Dissemination and Extending the Cultural Radiation path of Photo Archives**

Physical exhibition halls are limited by time and space, resulting in limited dissemination power. Therefore, it is necessary to establish diverse, networked, and three-dimensional educational dissemination channels to maximize the goal of enriching cultural education in colleges and universities through photo archives. Based on the requirements of cultural education in colleges and universities and the cultural activity demands of students, colleges and universities should combine communication media and innovate online exhibitions or educational activities. For example, utilizing platforms like Tencent Meeting, online videos, and new media live streaming can enable interactive sharing, break through time and space limitations, expand the scale of visits, and enhance the effectiveness of photo archive

cultural dissemination and radiation.

#### **4.4. Strengthening the Development of Cultural and Creative Products to Promote Photo Archive Cultural Resources**

Cultural and creative products are effective means to promote historical culture of colleges, enhance brand influence, and improve the effectiveness of education. By tapping into the rich historical and cultural resources contained in photo archives, colleges and universities can develop cultural and creative products. For instance, processing photo archives into exquisite cards or other display forms to showcase representative buildings, important historical events, and figures in the development history of the college. Similar or other innovative cultural and creative products can make positive contributions to enabling cultural education through photo archives in colleges and universities. It can also enhance the brand influence and reputation of colleges and universities.

### **5. Conclusion**

Chinese President Jinping Xi proposed, "Theoretical consciousness and cultural confidence are the forces for the progress of a nation. Advanced values and ideological liberation are the sources of social vitality. The soul of a nation is shaped by culture." Under the mission of cultural education in colleges and universities, broadening the vision of cultural education, deepening cultural education practices, and effectively meeting the emotional and cultural needs of

students are the commitments and missions of cultural education work. Actively exploring the cultural education attributes of photo archives, organizing the historical stories hidden in photo archives into cultural education materials, and using an immersive experience to resonate with students can enhance their cultural identity and sense of belonging to the school. By utilizing diverse pathways of cultural education through photo archives, the dissemination and inheritance of college culture can be achieved.

### **Acknowledgments**

This work is supported by the University-level Scientific Research Projects (ACJFC23023), Teaching and Research Projects (acjyyb2023008).

### **References**

- [1] L. Li: Exploration and practice of the compilation and utilization of photo archives in ethnic universities in the era of reading images[J]. *Inside and outside of Lantai*, 2021:13-14.
- [2] J. Y. Zeng, W. Gu, L. C. Liu, Y. Zhang: Exploration of innovative editing and research ideas for photo archives[J]. *Archives communication*,2021(4): 72.
- [3] Roland Barthes: *Mingshi: Photography Notes*[M].K. F. Zhao,translated. Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 2011: 102-104.
- [4] CONWAYP, PUNZALANR. Fields of vision: toward a new theory of visual literacy for digitized archival photographs[J]. *Archivaria*, 2011(71):63-97.
- [5] J. P. Xi: *On the history of the CPC*[M]. Beijing: Central Party Literature Press,2021:206.