

The Role of Ethnic Music in Contemporary Music Education

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Abstract: This study explores the role and significance of folk music in contemporary music education, analyzes the definition, characteristics of folk music, and its challenges and opportunities in the context of globalization and modernization. By combing the key role of folk music in the cultivation of music literacy, the enhancement of cultural identity, and aesthetic education, this study emphasizes the problems faced by folk music in the process of globalization, such as the dominance of the Western music system and the difficulty of cultural inheritance. It also points out that folk music education still has great development potential and opportunities through technological innovation, interdisciplinary teaching and global cultural integration. The study shows that through diversified teaching models and innovative curriculum design, folk music can not only enrich students' music literacy, but also enhance students' sense of identity with their own culture, and promote the diversity and inclusiveness of global music education through cross-cultural music exchanges. Therefore, folk music education occupies an irreplaceable position in the contemporary music education system and is of great significance for cultural inheritance and in.

1. Introduction

As a carrier of cultural inheritance, the rich cultural implication and historical accumulation can be found in folk music. In a globalizing contemporary environment, folk music is not only preserved as cultural heritage but is being integrated into modern educational systems and has become essential and indispensable for music education. Among these, influenced by the concept of multicultural education, music teaching in various countries of the world is gradually paying close attention to the various forms and contents of music teaching in their own cultural background, which not only can cultivate the musical literacy of students but also enhance their cultural identity and ability to understand other cultures [1]. Besides, with the rapid development of digital technology, the dissemination and learning channels of folk songs have been multiplied by a great number. In the face of the challenges of modernization, traditional music education forms have gradually transformed, emphasizing the integration of tradition and modernity, and ethnicity and globalization. Therefore, exploring the role of folk music in contemporary music education has important theoretical and practical significance.

1.1 Research background and importance

With the acceleration of the process of globalization and the increasing prominence of cultural diversity, the educational value of folk music has received more and more attention. In the field of music education, multicultural education has become a mainstream trend, which provides a good opportunity for the application of folk music in teaching [2]. As a special form of cultural expression, folk music can not only convey historical culture, but also help students deeply understand different cultural backgrounds and musical structures, thereby enhancing their musical aesthetic ability and cultural identity [3]. In China, folk music occupies a unique position in music education at all levels. It is not only an important part of cultural heritage protection, but also inherited and carried forward through the education system. However, modernization and globalization have brought new challenges to folk music education. On the one hand, the Western music education system has weakened the teaching status of folk music to a certain extent; on the other hand, how to maintain the uniqueness of folk music and achieve innovative development in the context of globalization has become an urgent problem to be solved [4].

As an important part of Chinese culture, folk music plays an irreplaceable role in cultivating students' musical literacy, enhancing cultural identity and promoting social and cultural inheritance [5]. By introducing folk music teaching, students can not only be exposed to a variety of musical forms and performance techniques, but also cultivate a sense of belonging and pride in their own national culture in a subtle way [6]. Therefore, studying the role of folk music in contemporary music education not only helps to improve the current music education system, but also provides theoretical support for cultural inheritance and innovation.

1.2 Research objectives

The main purpose of this study is to explore the role of folk music in contemporary music education and its impact on students' cultural identity and musical literacy. By combing through the current status and challenges of folk music education, this study aims to clarify the status of folk music in the modern education system and put forward suggestions on how to effectively carry out folk music education in a multicultural context. This study will focus on analyzing the combination of folk music and modern music education, explore how to achieve the innovation and inheritance of folk music through educational means, and then promote the application and development of folk music in contemporary education. At the same time, this study will also explore the practical effects of folk music education at different educational stages through specific case analysis, aiming to provide a theoretical basis for future educational policy formulation and teaching practice.

2. Definition and Characteristics of Folk Music

2.1 Basic Concepts of Folk Music

Folk music is a form of music based on a specific ethnic group or cultural group. It not only reflects the social structure, cultural identity and historical background of the nation, but is also preserved and spread through oral inheritance. According to Zhivitsa (2022) [7], folk music is not limited to traditional music, but also includes modern adaptations such as ethno-fusion, ethno-jazz and other music forms based on the fusion of different styles. This musical form retains its core ethnic music culture, but at the same time reinterprets and reconstructs it through modern techniques, allowing it to continue in the modern music space. This form emphasizes that ethnic music is not only a form of artistic expression, but also an important carrier of cultural inheritance and identity. In addition, ethnic music also has social functions, such as religious ceremonies, festivals, and various forms of musical

expression in life, which makes it not only an auditory enjoyment, but also a concrete manifestation of cultural values and beliefs [8].

2.2 Classification and regional characteristics of ethnic music

The classification of ethnic music is usually based on its geographical location, cultural background and historical traditions. The research of Kossanova et al. (2016) [9] shows that as part of cultural expression, the structure and expression of music are closely related to the ecological environment and lifestyle of the ethnic group. For example, the music of nomadic culture usually shows long and broad rhythms and melodies, which reflects the close connection between the culture and the natural environment. The ethnic music of different regions also varies in the choice and use of instruments. For example, the horse-head fiddle in Mongolian music are typical symbols of the regional culture and lifestyle. In addition, folk music can also be classified according to its function, such as sacrificial music, labor songs, etc. Each form of music plays a unique role in the social life of the ethnic group [9]. Shi and Ning (2022) [10] further pointed out that folk music is not only a reflection of a specific regional culture, but can also be inherited and protected through modern technical means, so that it can continue to play a role in cultural inheritance in the new social context.

2.3 Cultural connotation of folk music

The cultural connotation of folk music is not only reflected in its melody and rhythm, but also in the historical, cultural and social values it carries. Kashina and Tagiltseva (2022) [11] pointed out that music, as a cultural phenomenon, has the function of accumulating and transmitting cultural identity. Through listening to and playing music, individuals can resonate with their ethnic culture and enhance their sense of cultural belonging and identity. This function of folk music plays a vital role in the formation of cultural self-identity. In addition, music also has the function of emotional and moral education. By expressing the emotional world of a nation, it enables individuals to have a deeper understanding of the cultural values and social norms of the nation. Cui and Khomkrich (2022) [12] further emphasized the issue of cultural protection and inheritance of folk music in the context of globalization, and proposed to achieve the inheritance and development of folk music through big data technology from the perspective of cultural ecology. This shows that folk music is not only a heritage of historical culture, but also plays an important role in contemporary cultural construction.

3. Current Application of Folk Music in Contemporary Music Education

3.1 Folk Music Elements in Contemporary Music Education

In contemporary music education, the application of folk music elements is becoming more and more extensive. Especially in the context of globalization, the diversity and cultural inclusiveness of music education have gradually become the focus of educational reform. Yu (2019) [13] pointed out that the current music education model is deeply influenced by the Western music education system, resulting in the neglect of local traditional music culture in teaching. Therefore, integrating folk music elements into the modern music education system, especially in college and basic education, is an effective way to promote the inheritance of national culture. In China, folk music is not only an important part of cultural heritage, but it is also innovated and inherited through teaching methods. For example, by integrating traditional music and dance of ethnic minorities into the classroom, students can better understand the cultural connotations behind the music and enhance their cultural identity in the learning process. Zheng (2023) [14]'s research further shows that the combination of folk music and modern teaching models helps to cultivate students' cultural sensitivity and aesthetic

ability. This model can be optimized and promoted through big data technology to improve the educational effect of folk music.

3.2 Curriculum setting and implementation status of folk music education

In the contemporary music education system, the setting and implementation of folk music courses face many challenges and opportunities. Hao (2023) [15]'s research shows that the addition of folk music culture courses to music education in colleges and universities can enhance students' sense of identity with national culture and promote the inheritance of folk music. However, how to effectively integrate folk music culture in teaching and cultivate music talents with innovative spirit and practical ability is still an urgent problem to be solved. In order to meet this challenge, schools should build a diversified curriculum system, combine folk music with other art forms, and conduct interdisciplinary teaching. Isabirye (2021) [16] proposed that traditional folk music education should adopt more participatory teaching models to enhance students' music creation ability and cultural belonging through their active participation and leadership in class. This student-centered teaching method not only improves the participation rate of folk music courses, but also deepens students' understanding and recognition of folk music through practical operation and experiential learning.

3.3 The proportion of folk music in music education at all levels

The proportion of folk music in music education at all levels varies according to different regions and educational stages. Pointed out that although folk music is involved in the curriculum of universities and primary and secondary schools, Western music still dominates in specific teaching practices. In primary and secondary schools, folk music is more often taught as part of the music curriculum, while at the university level, especially in conservatories, the proportion of folk music has increased. However, Zheng (2023) [13]'s research shows that even at the university level, students' interest in folk music is still low, and many students prefer to learn pop music. Therefore, it is necessary to enhance the status of folk music at all levels of education through policy support and curriculum reform. In addition, Walker (2016) [17] pointed out that in the multicultural context of music education, teachers should introduce more ethnic music cultures from all over the world by updating teaching concepts and course content to enhance students' awareness of cultural diversity and global vision.

4. The role of ethnic music in cultivating students' musical literacy

4.1 The diversity of ethnic music in cultivating musical literacy

As a diverse cultural expression, ethnic music can greatly enrich students' musical literacy. It not only covers different tones, rhythms, and melodic structures, but also provides rich musical experiences through different cultural backgrounds and traditions. Studies have shown that by contacting and learning ethnic music, students can develop a broader range of musical cognitive abilities and enhance their creativity in a diversified musical environment [17]. For example, Nethsinghe (2012) [18] pointed out that in Australia's multicultural music education, by introducing music from Sri Lanka and other ethnic minorities, students not only improved their musical skills, but also learned to understand and respect musical expressions from multiple cultural backgrounds. This diversity education enables students to contact and learn music from different cultures in a global context, not just Western music, and enhance the breadth and depth of their musical literacy. Therefore, as an important element in music education, folk music helps to cultivate students' diverse musical literacy and enable them to have more comprehensive abilities in future music creation and

appreciation.

4.2 Cultivation of cultural identity through folk music

Folk music plays a vital role in cultivating students' cultural identity. As a carrier of culture, music can help students enhance their cognition and identification with their cultural background through learning and performing folk music. Guan et al. (2022) [19] showed that through music courses based on culturally responsive teaching (CRT), students' cultural identity was significantly improved after participating in the study of folk music. The study specifically pointed out that teaching with minority music and mother tongue not only helps students understand their own culture, but also enhances their cultural pride and sense of belonging through collective music participation. Palubinskienė (2015) [20] further emphasized the importance of cultivating cultural identity through folk music education, especially in the process of globalization, the inheritance of traditional culture faces challenges. Through the study of folk music, students can not only benefit at the musical level, but also consolidate their national identity at the cultural level.

4.3 The role of folk music in aesthetic education

Folk music occupies an important position in aesthetic education. It provides students with rich aesthetic experiences through different musical forms, timbres and structures. Walker (2016) [21] pointed out that music education in a multicultural context, especially the introduction of folk music teaching, can broaden students' aesthetic horizons and enhance their understanding of musical aesthetics in different cultures. Through the study of folk music, students can be exposed to different musical styles and aesthetic standards. This experience can help them form a more inclusive and open attitude in the process of musical aesthetics. In addition, the research of Ilari et al. (2013) [22] shows that by singing and playing music from different cultures, students can deeply understand the aesthetics and social values of these cultures, thereby realizing the integration of aesthetics and culture in music education. Therefore, folk music not only enriches students' musical aesthetic experience, but also helps them establish aesthetic recognition of different cultures in a global cultural environment. Figure 1 shows the main role of folk music in contemporary aesthetic education, including its multiple functions in enriching aesthetic experience, cultivating diverse aesthetic views, enhancing cultural identity, and improving musical appreciation, highlighting the core value of folk music as cultural heritage and aesthetic education.

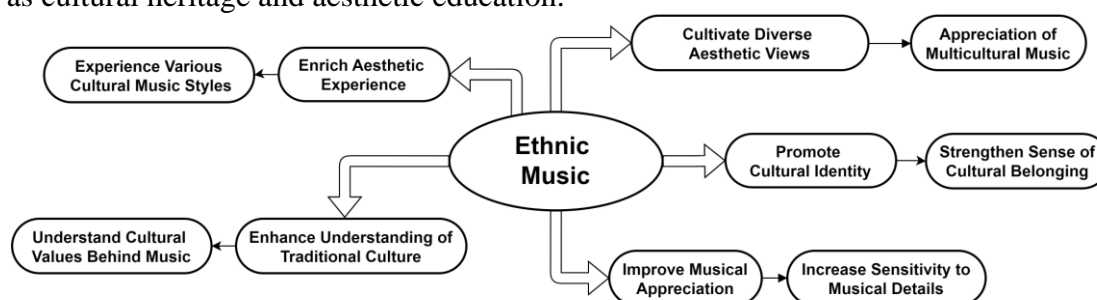


Figure 1: The main role of folk music in contemporary aesthetic education

5. Challenges and opportunities of national music education in contemporary music education

5.1 Challenges of national music education in the process of modernization

In the process of modernization, national music education faces many severe challenges. First, the

global influence of Western music continues to expand, especially in the education system, Western music theory and methods dominate, which has led to a relative reduction in teaching resources and opportunities for local national music. In addition, urbanization and changes in modern lifestyles have also caused many traditional music forms to be gradually forgotten, especially among the younger generation, the appeal of national music is weakening. Secondly, the oral and heart-to-heart nature of national music also faces inheritance difficulties in modern education. The lack of systematic teaching materials and teaching standards makes it more difficult to implement national music in education. The professional quality of teachers and the teaching resources of national music are relatively insufficient, which also limits the popularization and promotion of national music. Finally, in the modernization transformation of national music, how to maintain its cultural uniqueness and authenticity while adapting to the needs of modern society is also an important issue currently facing.

5.2 Innovation and inheritance of national music education

Although national music education faces many challenges, many innovations and opportunities have also emerged in the process of modernization. Technological progress, especially the development of the Internet and digital platforms, has provided unprecedented convenience for the dissemination and learning of folk music. Through multimedia resources, students can more easily access the music culture of different ethnic groups, enhancing their interest and effectiveness in learning. In addition, many educators and researchers have begun to explore the combination of folk music with other art forms and conduct interdisciplinary teaching methods, such as combining folk music with dance, drama, etc. to enrich teaching content. At the same time, many regions have also tried to integrate folk music education into daily life and traditional celebrations through cooperation between schools and communities, helping students to better understand and inherit folk music through practical experience. In addition, more innovative practices are gradually being carried out in textbook compilation and curriculum design, providing more systematic and standardized resources for folk music education.

5.3 Integration of folk music education and global music culture

In the context of globalization, the collision and integration of folk music with other cultures has become an inevitable trend. The diversity of global music culture provides more communication and display platforms for folk music, and also brings opportunities for the innovation and development of folk music. In education, how to absorb and integrate elements of global music culture while retaining the characteristics of folk music has become an important topic in current folk music education. Through cross-cultural music exchange programs, students can not only understand the musical characteristics of other cultures, but also deepen their understanding of their own national music through comparison and integration. In addition, globalization has also promoted the spread and influence of national music on the international stage, injecting new vitality into it. However, in the process of integrating with global music culture, national music also faces the challenge of how to maintain its own uniqueness. Therefore, in the context of globalization, national music education should be open and inclusive, absorb the advantages of other cultures, and adhere to its own cultural confidence to ensure the unique position of national music in the global music landscape.

6. Conclusion

This paper has systematically explained the role of national music in modern music education and comprehensively analyzed the concept of national music, its characteristics, and application status, and its challenges in music education. First of all, as an important carrier of culture, national music

reflects the history and social structure of a nation, as well as its values. Its introduction into music education not only enriches the musical literacy of the students but also contributes to the nurturing of their cultural identity. Through diversified national music teaching, students will be exposed to the expression of music in different cultural backgrounds, which can help increase their understanding and tolerance of multiculturalism. The modernization process indeed renders folk music with many challenges: the dominance of Western music on every level, the alienation of the younger generation from traditional music-being two good examples. However, with the help of technological innovation and interdisciplinary teaching methods, folk music education seems also to show new vitality and potential. Through continuous innovation in curriculum design and teaching methodologies, folk music came to find its position in the globalization environment and became an important part of music education.

Thus, this paper concludes that folk music would inevitably affect students in terms of musical literacy, cultural identity, and multicultural integration. However, for better inheritance and development of folk music in modern education, more in-depth exploration and reform in curriculum setting, teacher training, and education policies are called for. Only through systematic teaching strategies and the joint efforts of the whole society can the effective inheritance of folk music be achieved and its widespread application in contemporary music education be promoted.

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