

The Contribution of Vocal Music Education in Colleges and Universities to Cultural Inheritance and Innovation

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Abstract: The importance of education and cultural inheritance is becoming increasingly prominent. Through literature review and empirical research, combining quantitative data and qualitative analysis, this paper assesses the teaching methods, curriculum, and student interest and participation in vocal music education in colleges and universities. The study found that vocal music education played a positive role in increasing students' participation in cultural activities, enhancing their identification with traditional music and improving their skills, despite problems such as inadequate teaching systems and homogenized curricula. In particular, the participation rate of students in cultural activities before and after the educational changes increased significantly from 31–54.7% to 62.4–83.6%, indicating that vocal music education can effectively stimulate students' enthusiasm for cultural participation. In addition, the strengthening of the teaching staff and innovations in teaching methods, such as the application of multimedia and virtual reality technologies, provide students with richer learning experiences and personalized learning paths.

Keywords: College vocal music education; Cultural heritage; Cultural innovation; Cultural activity participation rate

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1. Introduction

Colleges and universities are the cradle for cultivating talents, bearing the responsibility of cultivating students with profound cultural heritage and innovative abilities. Especially in the field of vocal music education, how to inherit and develop national culture while stimulating students' innovative thinking and practical skills has become an important topic for educators.

This paper explores the role of vocal music education in colleges and universities in cultural inheritance and innovation, analyzes the status quo of the current educational practice, and proposes optimization strategies. Through literature review and empirical research, this paper evaluates the teaching methods, curriculum, and students' interest and participation in vocal music education in colleges and universities, and combines quantitative data and qualitative analysis to propose targeted improvement suggestions.

This paper first introduces the background and significance of the study and then describes the research

method and data sources. Subsequently, the paper analyzes the current situation of vocal music education in colleges and universities from multiple dimensions, such as teaching methods, curriculum, and students' interests, and puts forward improvement strategies. Lastly, the article summarizes the research results and puts forward an outlook on the future development of college vocal music education.

2. Literature review

In today's fast-developing society, the importance of education and cultural inheritance is becoming more and more prominent. Wu and Lin established construction goals and paths around the cultivation of four abilities: deep humanity, rich experience, strong self-confidence, and innovation ability, and put forward a number of reform initiatives, such as opening up multi-channel cultural penetration, providing diverse forms of cultural and artistic experiences, integrating curriculum ideology and political education, and implementing step-by-step cultural and innovative design training ^[1]. Guo and Yu analyzed the necessity of the integration of digital cultural and creative products and non-heritage culture design, pointed out the principles of non-heritage culture inheritance and innovative design in digital cultural and creative products, and put forward the strategy for the integration of non-heritage culture inheritance and innovative design in digital cultural and creative products ^[2]. Based on the spatial distribution of historical Ming and Qing scholars and today's scientists and entrepreneurs, Ma and Wu empirically examined the influence and mechanism of the cultural heritage of education on the cultivation of innovative talents in the region, as well as the role played by the system ^[3]. Based on the significant role of these cultural heritages and sports traditions—including traditional folk sports activities, traditional martial arts, and traditional festivals—in the development of Chinese culture and the inheritance of national culture, Li and Song advocated for the effective inheritance and innovative exploration of traditional sports ^[4]. Zuo *et al.* explored how to use self-media platforms to protect and inherit the intangible cultural heritage of Nanjing velvet flowers through methods such as data collection, questionnaire surveys, case studies, and data analysis ^[5].

In addition, Rosina *et al.* explored the balance between vocational education courses in meeting industrial needs and the goals of vocational education itself, emphasizing the connection between education and the labor market ^[6]. Li and Pilz analyzed the transfer of vocational education and training in different countries and regions and its influencing factors ^[7]. Kovalchuk *et al.* explored the position and role of vocational education in the modern education system through theoretical research and empirical analysis ^[8]. Dahalan *et al.* analyzed the application and effectiveness of gamified learning in vocational education and training through a systematic literature review ^[9]. Yeap *et al.* analyzed the challenges and problems faced by technical vocational education and training education during the epidemic through case studies and questionnaire surveys ^[10]. After examining the above studies, it is found that although they provide rich perspectives and profound insights, existing research has not given sufficient attention to the role of vocal music education in cultural inheritance and innovation in universities. This article aims to explore how vocal music education can more effectively promote cultural inheritance and innovation, and how to cultivate a new generation of vocal talents with international perspectives and local cultural confidence in the context of globalization. This not only helps to enrich existing educational and cultural research but also provides new insights and directions for practical fields.

3. Methods

3.1. Cultural inheritance and innovation

The contribution of vocal music education in colleges and universities to cultural inheritance and innovation has a non-negligible role, which is reflected in its direct participation in the process of preservation, development, and

innovation of musical art ^[11,12]. In addition to the teaching of traditional vocal skills, this education is a deepening of the understanding of the connotation of musical culture.

Cultural heritage in vocal music education implies the systematic study of traditional musical forms, singing techniques, and expressions. Students learn to acquire musical knowledge and skills and understand the cultural significance and historical background behind musical works. Meanwhile, in vocal music education, innovation is manifested in the reinterpretation of traditional musical forms, the integration of traditional elements with modern musical styles and techniques, and the promotion of the development of musical art to adapt to the needs of modern aesthetics and expression. On the basis of their mastery of traditional skills, students are encouraged to experiment creatively, incorporating their personal artistic concepts and the spirit of the times into their works, thereby promoting the innovative development of musical culture.

3.2. Status quo of vocal music education in colleges and universities

At present, the teaching methods and curriculum of vocal music education in colleges and universities are gradually developing towards diversification and systematization. In terms of curriculum, vocal music education in colleges and universities pays attention to combining students' basic theories, teaching methods, and classroom teaching practice, so that students can understand and apply them flexibly ^[13,14]. In addition, students' mastery of vocal music is insufficient, and their learning content is mainly concentrated in Western vocal music, with a low proportion of national vocal music and few practical courses. Students are highly interested in popular vocal music, but not in traditional forms such as musical and opera vocal music. In order to improve the quality of vocal music teaching, we can implement the reform of vocal music education, clarify the training objectives, arrange courses and class hours reasonably, and strengthen the teaching team. At the same time, the online communication platform and intelligent evaluation system are established by using multimedia technology and virtual reality technology.

In the new media era, vocal music teaching in colleges and universities has built a more flexible, rich, and personalized teaching mode by integrating multimedia resources, introducing virtual reality technology, opening online communication platforms, and introducing an intelligent evaluation system.

3.3. Connection between vocal music education and cultural inheritance

From traditional opera and folk songs to opera singing, these forms are an important part of traditional Chinese vocal music culture, and they are the accumulation and crystallization of national emotion, life, thought, spirit, and aesthetics ^[15,16]. Vocal music education is not only an essential part of music education but also a crucial carrier of traditional culture education. However, the teaching system of vocal music in Chinese colleges and universities has long been centered on Western music theory, leading to the "rigidization" of the aesthetic system of national vocal music. On the other hand, traditional folk vocal music culture is absent in the teaching system of colleges and universities.

To solve these problems, reversing the concepts, strengthening cultural introspection and cultural identity, excavating and utilizing the treasure trove of traditional vocal culture, and constructing a systematic vocal theory system with the roots of traditional vocal culture are the recommended actions. At the same time, teachers improve the cultural literacy of traditional music to stimulate students' cultural identity and learning interests.

The construction of a vocal music education system in colleges and universities is a comprehensive and systematic project that includes various aspects such as content, teachers, and teaching methods. In this process, the subjectivity of national culture and the inclusiveness of world multiculturalism should be insisted.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Vocal music education and cultural inheritance

In vocal music education in colleges and universities, traditional vocal culture has been integrated into the curriculum, which not only provides students with a platform for learning as an elective or specialized course but also provides them with valuable practice opportunities by increasing the number of stage performances and competitions related to traditional Chinese music and culture. These activities facilitated students' interaction with professionals and enhanced their live performance skills. The participation rates of 30 students in traditional and contemporary cultural activities before and after their vocal music education are shown in **Figure 1**.

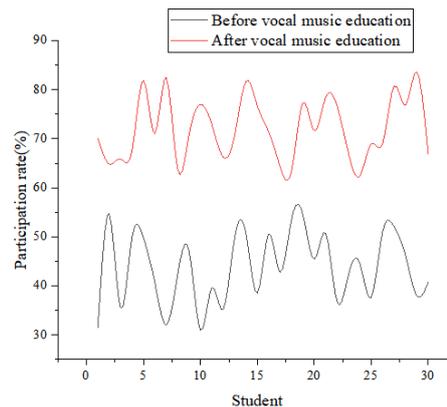


Figure 1. Participation rate in cultural activities

In this paper, the participation rates of 30 students in traditional and modern cultural activities before and after vocal music education were compared. **Figure 1** reveals the prominent role of vocal music education in increasing students' participation in cultural activities, which varies between 31% and 54.7% before vocal music education and increases to between 62.4% and 83.6% after vocal music education. With the intervention of vocal music education, there was a significant increase in students' participation in cultural activities, indicating that vocal music education not only increased students' awareness of cultural activities but also stimulated their participation.

In terms of teacher team building, universities train vocal music teachers with deep traditional music and cultural literacy and enhance their professionalism and teaching ability through high-quality training and exchange platforms. **Figure 2** shows the number of music innovation programs initiated by teachers before and after teacher team building in 25 universities.

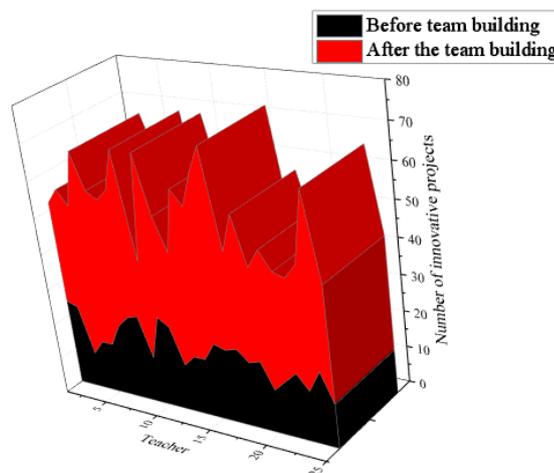


Figure 2. Number of innovative projects

According to the data on the number of innovative projects in **Figure 2**, the number of music innovation projects initiated by teachers after team building is significantly higher than that before team building. Based on the data, there were initially 24 innovative projects before team building, which increased to 28 after team building. This is not only an increase in quantity but also a significant sign of teachers' professional development and cultural innovation ability improvement.

The practice of vocal music education in universities not only deepens students' understanding of traditional Chinese culture but also cultivates their innovative thinking and international perspective. Through these educational practices, students not only master traditional music skills but also enhance their pride and confidence in Chinese culture, laying a solid foundation for the modern dissemination and international exchange of traditional music.

4.2. Vocal music education and cultural innovation

The integration of technology has brought new changes to vocal music education, with the application of digital audio workstations and virtual reality technology providing students with innovative learning and creative tools. Interdisciplinary learning has become a part of vocal education, combining fields such as musicology, drama, dance, and visual arts to promote the integration and innovation of different art forms. In this process, the role of students has changed from passively receiving knowledge to becoming creators and researchers. By participating in projects, research, and creation, students have made substantial contributions to cultural innovation. On-campus music festivals, workshops, and master classes not only enhance students' practical skills but also provide them with opportunities to showcase their creativity. **Figure 3** shows the employment rates of graduates from different universities in the fields of cultural inheritance and innovation before and after the reform of vocal music education.

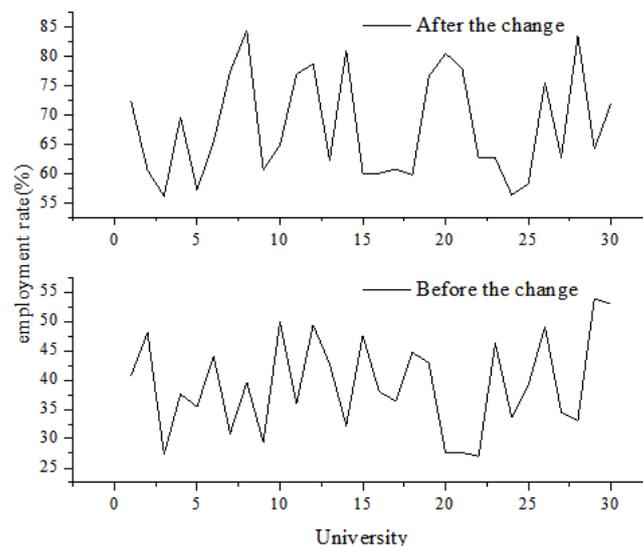


Figure 3. Employment rate

The employment rate data in **Figure 3** indicates that before the reform of vocal music education, the highest employment rate in universities reached 53.9%, while after the reform, it reached 84.4%. This leap not only reflects the direct impact of vocal music education reform on the improvement of students' employability but also indicates the high recognition of the market for vocal graduates who have received updated education. Through international exchange programs and collaborations, students understand and absorb innovative elements from different cultures, thereby promoting cultural innovation on a global scale.

4.3. Discussion

The research on the contribution of vocal music education in universities to cultural inheritance and innovation reveals the key role of educational practice in promoting cultural development. By comparing the cultural activity participation rate of students before and after vocal music education, we find a significant improvement, which not only confirms the effectiveness of vocal education in enhancing students' cultural identity but also reflects the positive role of education in stimulating students' participation in cultural activities. In addition, educational reform has had a positive impact on students' employment rates, indicating a close connection between education and market demand. The updating of education has improved students' professional skills and innovation abilities.

Although the research results are encouraging, the limited sample size affects the generalizability of the results. The increase in participation rate in cultural activities is influenced by various factors, including personal interests, social environment, etc., which were not fully considered in this study. In addition, the effectiveness of educational reform changes over time and requires long-term follow-up research for further verification. Based on the analysis of research results and limitations, vocal music education in universities should continue to promote innovation in curriculum and teaching methods and strengthen connections with the industry and society, providing students with more practical and employment opportunities. Universities should establish a more comprehensive evaluation system to continuously monitor and improve the quality of education.

5. Conclusion

This study analyzed the role of vocal music education in cultural inheritance and innovation in universities and revealed the positive impact of vocal music education on students' cultural participation and identity through empirical data. The research results indicate that vocal music education not only enhances students' participation in cultural activities but also strengthens their understanding and interest in traditional music. In addition, educational reform provides students with more diverse and personalized learning experiences by introducing new technologies and teaching methods. Although the research results are remarkable, the limited sample size affects the wide applicability of the results, and cultural participation is influenced by multiple factors, which cannot be comprehensively covered in this study. In addition, the long-term effects of educational reform still need to be continuously observed and evaluated. In the future, vocal music education in universities should continue to promote curriculum innovation and teaching method reform, strengthen teacher training, and establish a more comprehensive educational evaluation system. At the same time, strengthening cooperation with the industry can provide more practical opportunities and ensure that educational content is synchronized with market demand and social development.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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