

Article

Research on the Development Path of Children's Music Activities Based on the Inheritance of Traditional Culture

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Abstract: Traditional culture carries rich aesthetic experience and long-standing cultural wisdom, and the preschool stage represents a crucial period for children's cultural perception and aesthetic awakening. Integrating elements of traditional culture into children's music activities not only responds to the developmental needs of aesthetic education in early childhood but also provides an effective pathway for the continuity of cultural heritage within educational settings. Based on the physical and psychological development characteristics of children aged 3-6 and the fundamental principles of early music learning, this study analyzes both the educational value and the practical challenges of embedding traditional cultural content into daily music activities. From four interconnected dimensions-content exploration, activity design, implementation strategies, and evaluation systems-the research systematically discusses development pathways for constructing music activities grounded in traditional culture. Through singing, rhythmic movement, instrumental exploration, performance, and creative participation, children are guided to experience the expressive beauty of traditional musical forms in ways that are vivid, engaging, and developmentally appropriate. These processes support children in accumulating cultural understanding while simultaneously enhancing their musical perception, expressive ability, and aesthetic sensitivity. Ultimately, this integrated approach promotes the coordinated development of musical literacy and cultural awareness, enabling young children to form meaningful cultural impressions through everyday musical experiences.

Keywords: traditional culture inheritance; children's music activities; development pathways; aesthetic education

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1. Introduction

The *Guidelines for Learning and Development of Children Aged 3-6* clearly recommend drawing on traditional festivals and folk customs to help young children recognize cultural diversity and appreciate cultural uniqueness [1]. As an essential component of traditional culture, music reflects a nation's aesthetic orientation, life experience, and spiritual temperament. Folk nursery rhymes, ethnic melodies, and traditional musical instruments are closely connected to children's daily lives and naturally embody vivid, playful characteristics. These features make them especially suitable as meaningful carriers through which young children can approach and understand traditional culture in an intuitive and engaging manner.

At present, early childhood music education is largely dominated by modern nursery songs and popular music [2,3]. Although elements of traditional culture are occasionally introduced, they are often presented in a fragmented or decorative way that lacks depth and continuity. Such practices make it difficult for young children to develop a genuine understanding of the inner meaning and expressive richness of traditional culture. When traditional musical content is treated merely as supplementary material

rather than as an integral part of daily learning, children's opportunities to form authentic cultural experiences are significantly limited [4].

From a cultural perspective, the inheritance of traditional culture in early childhood education requires more than symbolic exposure; it calls for systematic integration into everyday learning activities that align with children's cognitive characteristics and developmental needs. Music activities, with their inherent combination of rhythm, movement, emotion, and creativity, provide a natural pathway for this integration. Through singing traditional melodies, exploring simple traditional instruments, participating in performance-based activities, and engaging in creative musical expression, children can gradually form perceptual connections with traditional culture. These experiences allow them to encounter the expressive charm of ethnic music in ways that are concrete, lively, and developmentally appropriate [5].

By embedding traditional cultural elements into daily music activities rather than presenting them as isolated content, early childhood education can foster sustained cultural awareness. This approach not only enriches children's aesthetic experiences but also supports the gradual development of cultural identity and confidence. In this way, music education becomes an important medium for transmitting traditional culture, laying a solid and lasting foundation for its continuity within early childhood education contexts.

2. The Core Value of Integrating Traditional Culture into Children's Music Activities

2.1. Enriching Children's Musical Experiences and Enhancing Musical Literacy

Traditional culture boasts a rich variety of musical forms [6]. The catchy tunes of folk nursery rhymes, the melodious melodies of ethnic music, and the distinctive timbres of traditional instruments can break the monotony of young children's musical experiences, exposing them to diverse forms of musical expression [2]. Through learning to sing nursery rhymes, playing traditional instruments, and imitating ethnic dances and songs, children can enhance their musical abilities such as rhythm perception, melody mastery, and physical expression [7]. This enriches their musical aesthetic experiences and lays a solid foundation for their musical literacy.

2.2. Enlightenment of Cultural Awareness and Cultivation of Cultural Identity

Traditional cultural elements in children's music activities are deeply rooted in their daily lives, traditional festivals, and folk customs [8]. Examples include the "New Year Greeting Song" during the Spring Festival, the dragon boat tunes of the Dragon Boat Festival, and folk clapping nursery rhymes. Through these musical activities, children gradually understand the customs of traditional festivals and the essence of folk culture [9]. They experience the patriotic sentiments and life wisdom embedded in ethnic music, fostering a growing appreciation for local culture and nurturing a sense of cultural identity.

2.3. Aligning with Children's Cognitive Characteristics to Promote Holistic Development

Young children's thinking is characterized by concretization and playfulness. Traditional music forms, such as the question-and-answer structure of nursery rhymes, the interactive nature of folk dances, and the rhythmic games of percussion, align well with their learning patterns. Through enjoyable musical activities, children not only spark their imagination and creativity but also develop communication skills and teamwork awareness through group performances and collaborative activities, fostering comprehensive social and physical development [10].

2.4. Inheriting the National Spirit and Continuation of Cultural Roots

The preservation of traditional culture must begin with children. As the new generation of cultural inheritors, young children can effectively pass down and sustain

ethnic music traditions through musical activities, where they engage with, perceive, and develop a love for these cultural elements. The cultural understanding and emotional connections cultivated through music will deepen with their growth, transforming them into inheritors of national spirit and breathing new life into traditional culture in the modern era.

3. Existing Problems of Integrating Traditional Culture into Children's Music Activities

3.1. Superficial content mining with lack of systematicness

When designing music activities, some educators only scratch the surface of traditional culture, favoring familiar folk nursery rhymes and classic ethnic tunes without systematically organizing or selecting content tailored to preschoolers' developmental stages. The curriculum lacks depth, with repetitive activities across different age groups. Moreover, they overlook local cultural resources, failing to integrate indigenous folk and traditional music into lessons. This results in monotonous content that hinders children's development of a comprehensive cultural understanding.

3.2. The activity design is formalistic and lacks experiential elements

Current traditional culture-themed music activities often exhibit a 'form-over-experience' bias. Teachers typically design these activities as simple song teaching and music appreciation sessions, lacking interactive elements that encourage children's active participation and deep cultural immersion. For instance, in ethnic music appreciation sessions, children are merely exposed to music without interactive components like body language expression or instrument imitation. Similarly, traditional festival music activities focus solely on teaching songs without incorporating folk customs through games or performances. This approach prevents children from truly understanding cultural significance, reducing their engagement to passive reception of standardized cultural symbols.

3.3. Monotonous implementation strategies with lack of engagement

During the activity implementation, teachers continued to use the traditional "teacher demonstration-child imitation" approach, failing to innovate teaching strategies tailored to children's developmental stages. For traditional instruments, instructors often directly instructed percussion techniques without allowing children to explore timbre characteristics independently. When teaching folk songs and dances, they predominantly required mechanical imitation of movements rather than encouraging personalized expression based on children's understanding. This monotonous approach stripped traditional cultural music activities of their appeal, failed to spark children's interest in learning, and ultimately undermined the effectiveness of cultural heritage transmission.

3.4. Insufficient resource integration and lack of supporting measures

On one hand, kindergartens face a shortage of traditional cultural music resources, including specialized instruments, ethnic music picture books, and folk music animations. Some traditional instruments are too bulky or difficult to handle for young children. On the other hand, teachers fail to effectively integrate cultural resources from families and communities. They do not invite folk artists or parents with cultural interests to participate in activities, nor do they utilize community cultural venues or events for outdoor music experiences. This lack of resources hinders the creation of a collaborative cultural inheritance environment among families, schools, and communities.

3.5. Lack of evaluation system and guidance

Currently, there is no established scientific evaluation system for traditional culture inheritance through children's music activities. Teachers' assessments predominantly focus on musical skill mastery—such as whether children can sing songs or hit the right rhythm—while overlooking core dimensions like cultural understanding, emotional engagement, and participation. The evaluation methods remain overly simplistic, relying mainly on teacher assessments without incorporating children's self-evaluations, peer reviews, or parental feedback. This approach fails to fully reflect the cultural transmission outcomes of these activities and provides no effective guidance for their optimization and improvement.

4. Development Path of Children's Music Activities Based on Traditional Cultural Inheritance

4.1. Systematic exploration of cultural content to establish a stratified content framework

Content development is the core of traditional culture music activities, which should be combined with the age characteristics and cognitive rules of children to construct a systematic and stratified cultural content system, and at the same time, explore local cultural resources to enrich the content dimension.

For younger preschoolers, we select simple, catchy folk rhymes and basic traditional music that reflect daily life, such as "Clapping Song" and "Pulling the Radish," along with interactive percussion instruments like wooden fish and gongs, to help children discover the charm of traditional culture. For middle-grade children, we introduce ethnic music appreciation and folk dance imitation, featuring classic pieces like "Jasmine Flower" and "Happy Yangyang," along with simple movements from traditional dances like Yangko and stilt-walking. We also incorporate light traditional instruments like the hulusi and bamboo flute to develop musical perception. For older preschoolers, we integrate music related to traditional festivals and customs, such as themed songs for Dragon Boat Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival, and Spring Festival. We guide children to create simple rhythms using traditional instruments and perform musical performances based on folk stories, deepening their cultural understanding.

In addition, teachers should explore the local traditional cultural music resources, such as the Li and Miao folk songs in Hainan, the Nanyin fragments in southern Fujian, and the Yangge tunes in northern Shaanxi, and integrate the regional culture into music activities, so that children can feel the unique charm of local culture and enhance their sense of cultural belonging.

4.2. Designing Innovative Activities to Create Experiential Models

Activity design should avoid formalism, centering on the core principles of 'experience, interaction, and creation,' and integrate the gamified learning characteristics of young children to create immersive and experiential activity models. This enables children to explore the essence of traditional culture through 'learning by doing and learning by playing.'

The program features four innovative approaches: 1) **Game-based nursery rhymes**: Integrating folk songs with finger-counting games and group activities. For example, combining "Counting Ducks" with finger counting exercises and "Passing the Handkerchief" with group tag games helps children memorize rhymes while experiencing rhythmic beauty. 2) **Musical immersion**: Incorporating multi-sensory elements in traditional music appreciation. Children paint the poetic imagery of "Spring River Moonlit Night" and perform the lively rhythm of "Golden Snake Dance" through physical movements, deepening their understanding of the music's emotional essence. 3) **Cultural fusion**: Seamlessly blending traditional festivals and customs into musical activities. During Spring Festival, children perform "New Year Greeting Songs"; during Dragon Boat Festival, they create "Dragon Boat Rhythmic Arrangements"; and during

Mid-Autumn Festival, they sing "Mid-Autumn Ballads" together. These activities allow children to experience folk culture through music, achieving a harmonious fusion of tradition and artistry. 4) ****Instrumental exploration****: Providing traditional instruments like wooden fish, triangle irons, coconut shell drums, and bamboo clappers. Children freely touch, strike, and experiment with these tools, discovering their unique tones. They are encouraged to use these instruments to accompany nursery rhymes and music, enhancing their practical skills through hands-on engagement.

4.3. Optimize Activity Implementation Strategies with Emphasis on Diversified Teaching Guidance

The key to the implementation of the activity is to fit the learning characteristics of children, optimize the teaching strategy, stimulate children's interest in learning through diversified guidance, and make children actively participate in traditional culture music activities, so as to realize the transformation from "passive acceptance" to "active exploration".

First, employ game-based teaching methods by integrating musical knowledge and cultural content into engaging activities such as "Traditional Instrument Guessing", "Rhythmic Rhyme Relay", and "Ethnic Melody Challenge". These games help children accumulate cultural knowledge and enhance musical skills. Second, adopt experiential exploration methods to guide children in discovering traditional culture through independent and collaborative exploration. For example, organize group activities where children experiment with different traditional instruments to accompany the same nursery rhyme, exploring varied timbral effects. Third, utilize scenario creation techniques by setting up folk culture settings through activities like arranging folk lanterns, playing traditional animations, and narrating folk stories. For instance, during yangge dance performances, create scenes with red lanterns and silk ribbons to immerse children in the atmosphere of folk music. Fourth, implement collaborative performance methods where children work in groups to create musical performances incorporating traditional cultural elements. Examples include arranging traditional instrument accompaniments based on "Journey to the West" stories or organizing group singing and dancing performances using Li and Miao folk songs, fostering children's cooperative awareness and creative abilities. Meanwhile, teachers should transform their roles from "instructors" to "guides" and "collaborators", encouraging children to express traditional music in personalized ways through activities like adapting nursery rhyme lyrics or composing accompaniment rhythms for ethnic music, thereby deepening their understanding of traditional culture through creative expression.

4.4. Integrating Diverse Educational Resources to Build a Collaborative Support System

The development of traditional culture music activities needs to integrate the resources of kindergarten, family and community, and construct a comprehensive and coordinated resource support system to provide sufficient materials and atmosphere guarantee for the activities.

Within kindergartens, we will optimize the allocation of traditional cultural music resources by acquiring traditional instruments such as wooden fish, bamboo flutes, hulusi, and coconut shell drums. Teaching materials including ethnic music picture books, folk music animations, and traditional song and dance videos will be provided. A dedicated traditional cultural music activity room will be established, featuring a folk music wall and a traditional instrument display area to foster a rich cultural atmosphere. Additionally, teacher training will be enhanced to improve educators' cultural literacy and activity design skills, enabling them to accurately identify cultural content and scientifically design activity plans.

In home-kindergarten collaboration, we employ parent education programs and family activities to foster cultural heritage awareness. Initiatives like the "Parent-Child

Nursery Rhyme Competition" and "Traditional Family Instrument Concerts" encourage parents to learn nursery rhymes and experience traditional music with their children, integrating cultural traditions into daily family life. For community-kindergarten partnerships, we leverage local cultural resources by inviting folk artists, intangible cultural heritage inheritors, and cultural enthusiasts to conduct public classes featuring traditional instrument performances and folk dance shows. Children also visit community cultural centers and squares to participate in folk music activities, immersing them in authentic cultural experiences.

4.5. Establishing a Scientific Evaluation System and Strengthening the Orientation of Developmental Evaluation

The establishment of scientific and comprehensive evaluation system is an important guarantee for optimizing traditional culture music activities and enhancing the effect of cultural inheritance. The evaluation should break through the limitation of "emphasizing skills and neglecting experience", adhere to the principle of developmental evaluation and diversified evaluation, and focus on the comprehensive development of children.

In the evaluation dimension, it covers four core aspects: cultural cognition, musical literacy, emotional experience, and participation performance. It not only evaluates whether children have mastered musical skills such as nursery rhymes and musical instruments, but also assesses their level of understanding of traditional cultural knowledge, their fondness for traditional culture, their participation in activities, and their ability to cooperate.

The evaluation framework integrates teacher assessments, self-evaluations by children, peer reviews, and parental feedback. Teachers conduct formative evaluations by observing children's performance during activities. Children are guided to self-assess using simple language and actions, such as "I love singing the Dragon Boat Festival nursery rhyme" or "I can play the wooden fish accompaniment." Peer evaluation is encouraged to identify strengths in children. Parental questionnaires and parent-child activities provide insights into children's exposure to traditional culture at home. The evaluation results serve as a critical basis for optimizing activity plans and adjusting teaching strategies. Issues identified during evaluations, such as inappropriate content difficulty or monotonous activity formats, are promptly addressed to improve activity design, ensuring evaluations genuinely support children's development and activity optimization.

5. Conclusion

The development of early childhood music activities rooted in traditional cultural inheritance represents an organic integration of aesthetic education and cultural preservation. Its essence lies not in imparting specific traditional knowledge or musical skills, but in enabling children to experience the beauty of traditional culture through engaging, experiential music activities. This approach cultivates cultural identity and nurtures emotional connections with heritage. As the future of our nation, children should be introduced to traditional culture from an early age, allowing ethnic musical traditions to become an integral part of their developmental journey.

In early childhood music education, teachers should consistently prioritize children as the primary focus, grounded in their physical and mental development. They should systematically explore traditional cultural elements, design experiential activities scientifically, optimize diversified implementation strategies, integrate resources from families, schools, and communities, and establish a developmental evaluation system. This ensures traditional music activities become a vital medium for children to perceive, appreciate, and inherit culture. Through continuous exploration and practice, children can experience the national spirit through music and cultivate cultural confidence through immersion. By deeply rooting traditional culture in their hearts, we can achieve the

generational transmission of ethnic music culture and allow traditional culture to shine anew in the new era.

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