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Research on the Integration of Li and Miao Culture into College Music Teaching from the Perspective of Aesthetic Education

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Abstract: As a vital vehicle for moral education in higher institutions, aesthetic education shoulders the contemporary mission of cultivating aesthetic sensibilities, preserving cultural heritage, and strengthening cultural confidence. Li-Miao culture, a distinctive traditional culture of Hainan, embodies unique aesthetic values and cultural significance through its musical forms (Li ethnic folk songs, Miao flying songs, bamboo and wood instrumental music, and dance rituals). This paper examines the practical significance and feasibility of integrating Li-Miao culture into university music education from an aesthetic education perspective. Addressing challenges such as fragmented curricula, insufficient faculty expertise, limited practical experience, and monolithic evaluation systems, it proposes a "five-in-one" implementation framework: curriculum restructuring, faculty empowerment, practice deepening, evaluation innovation, and institutional safeguards. This approach provides theoretical references and practical solutions for the deep integration of music education with Li-Miao cultural preservation, thereby enhancing the quality and effectiveness of aesthetic education while ensuring the dynamic transmission of regional culture.

Keywords: aesthetic education; Li and Miao cultures; music education in higher education; cultural integration; path research

1. Introduction

Aesthetic education serves as a vital pathway for cultivating students' ability to recognize, experience, create, and disseminate beauty, while being a pivotal component in fulfilling the fundamental mission of moral education and enhancing students' comprehensive qualities. The "Guidelines on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving Aesthetic Education in Schools in the New Era" explicitly advocates integrating China's outstanding traditional culture throughout aesthetic education, leveraging regional cultural resources to enrich both the content and forms of aesthetic instruction. As a unique cultural treasure of Hainan, the Li and Miao cultures feature music primarily transmitted through oral and mental instruction, combining authentic aesthetic qualities with cultural narrative functions, making them invaluable resources for aesthetic education in higher education institutions [1].

Currently, music education in higher education institutions still exhibits a tendency to 'prioritize Western over indigenous traditions, emphasize technical skills over aesthetic appreciation, and focus on theory over practice.' Regional ethnic music resources like Li-Miao culture have not been fully integrated into the aesthetic education system, resulting in students' insufficient aesthetic understanding of local culture and weak cultural identity. In this context, exploring effective pathways to incorporate Li-Miao culture into university music education from an aesthetic perspective can not only enrich the connotation of aesthetic education and enhance students' aesthetic literacy and cultural confidence,

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but also promote the living inheritance and innovative development of Li-Miao music culture, injecting new vitality into the cultural construction of the Hainan Free Trade Port [2].

2. The Aesthetic Value and Feasibility of Integrating Li and Miao Culture into College Music Teaching

2.1. Aesthetic Education Value: Shaping Aesthetic Personality and Inheriting Cultural Gene

To enrich aesthetic experiences and elevate aesthetic literacy, Li and Miao music artistry embodies distinctive aesthetic forms: the lyrical melodies of Li folk songs, the soaring vocalizations of Miao flying songs, the ethereal simplicity of bamboo and wood instruments (such as dingdong wood, nose flutes, and mouth bows), and the passionate exuberance of Li and Miao dance performances—all showcasing the natural beauty, emotional depth, and formal elegance of their indigenous traditions [3]. Integrating these elements into university music education can broaden students' perspectives beyond Western music, guiding them to appreciate diverse musical aesthetics and enhancing their abilities in aesthetic perception, judgment, and creation [4].

Cultivating cultural identity and boosting cultural confidence. Li and Miao music embodies the historical legacy, daily life, religious beliefs, and ethical values of these ethnic groups, serving as a living fossil of their culture. Through studying Li and Miao music, students can gain profound insights into the cultural essence and spiritual characteristics of these communities, fostering a stronger sense of identity and pride in their native culture. This process helps them establish proper cultural values and naturally become inheritors and promoters of Li and Miao culture [5].

Fostering moral education and nurturing well-rounded personalities. Li and Miao music embodies the national spirit of loving nature, teamwork, diligence, and bravery. The collective collaboration in the Li ethnic group's "Firewood Dance" and the warm hospitality of the Miao ethnic group's "Wine Offering Song" both reflect positive values [6]. Integrating these elements into aesthetic education allows for the cultivation of character through beauty and culture, guiding students to appreciate national spirit through aesthetic experiences and fostering a well-rounded personality that values patriotism, love for one's homeland, and moral excellence [7].

2.2. Feasibility: Policy Support, Resource Advantages, and Educational Needs

Policy support is reinforced through dual empowerment from both national and local governments. At the national level, the "Guidelines for School Aesthetic Education in the New Era" explicitly mandate the exploration of regional ethnic cultural resources and the integration of traditional culture into schools [8]. Against the backdrop of Hainan Free Trade Port development, local authorities have implemented multiple policies to protect and preserve Li and Miao cultures, promoting the convergence of ethnic cultures with education and cultural tourism industries. These measures provide institutional safeguards for incorporating Li and Miao cultures into university music education.

Hainan boasts abundant and highly adaptable Li and Miao musical resources. The Li ethnic group's folk songs encompass hundreds of varieties, including labor songs, love songs, and custom songs, while the Miao ethnic group features distinctive traditions like flying songs and lusheng dance. The region also hosts multiple national and provincial-level inheritors of Li and Miao intangible cultural heritage. These resources can be transformed into teaching materials through field research, compilation, and adaptation, providing substantial content support for music education in higher institutions [9].

To meet educational needs and align with the goals of aesthetic education and talent development in higher education, universities emphasize the principle of 'educating through beauty, refining through beauty, and nurturing through beauty.' Integrating Li and Miao cultures into music education aligns with these aesthetic education objectives. Moreover, Hainan universities must cultivate applied talents with both professional skills

and cultural heritage capabilities, leveraging regional characteristics. Teaching Li and Miao music enhances students' regional cultural literacy and boosts their employability.

3. The Realistic Difficulties of Integrating Li and Miao Culture into College Music Teaching

3.1. Fragmented Curriculum System and Lack of Systematic Integration of Aesthetic Education

In contemporary music education at Chinese universities, Li-Miao cultural content is predominantly delivered through electives, lectures, or extracurricular activities. These components occupy minimal class hours and are fragmented in content, failing to establish a coherent curriculum framework that progresses from theory to technical mastery, practical application, and creative expression. The current curriculum design overemphasizes skill-based training (e.g., folk song performance and instrumental playing) while neglecting aesthetic interpretation and cultural analysis [10]. This approach has failed to fully harness the aesthetic potential of Li-Miao music, resulting in students who "can sing but cannot appreciate, can play but do not understand beauty."

3.2. Weak faculty strength and insufficient aesthetic education teaching capacity

Most music teachers in higher education institutions graduated from traditional music academies, with their professional training primarily focused on Western music theory and techniques [11]. They lack systematic study of Li and Miao music and practical experience in intangible cultural heritage transmission, resulting in limited understanding of the aesthetic essence, vocal techniques, and cultural context of Li and Miao music. Teachers with expertise in Li and Miao music heritage preservation or regional cultural research are scarce, making it challenging to meet the demands of aesthetic education in Li and Miao music.

3.3. Weak Practical Teaching, Aesthetic Experience Is Reduced to a Formality

Practice constitutes the cornerstone of aesthetic education, yet current Li-Miao music pedagogy exhibits notable deficiencies. Schools lack dedicated training facilities (e.g., bamboo and wood instrument studios, Li-Miao song-dance rehearsal halls), while off-campus practice bases often fail to connect with Li-Miao communities (e.g., Li ethnic villages, Miao settlements). This disconnect prevents students from immersing in the authentic aesthetic environment of Li-Miao music. Practical activities remain limited to singing competitions and concerts, lacking in-depth experiential learning through field research, intangible cultural heritage performances, or creative cultural projects. Consequently, students' aesthetic creativity remains underdeveloped.

3.4. The evaluation system is monotonous, and the effect of aesthetic education is difficult to measure

The current music education evaluation system primarily focuses on technical assessments (such as pitch accuracy, rhythm, and vocal techniques), while neglecting the evaluation of students' aesthetic literacy in Li and Miao music, including their cultural understanding and creative practice. The evaluation methods predominantly rely on summative exams, lacking formative and diversified assessments. This approach fails to fully reflect the effectiveness of integrating Li and Miao culture into aesthetic education, and also struggles to motivate active participation from both teachers and students.

3.5. Lack of safeguard mechanisms and insufficient continuity in integration efforts

Higher education institutions lack dedicated mechanisms to integrate Li and Miao cultures into music education, with no specialized teaching reform teams established. Funding and policy support are insufficient for curriculum development, faculty training, and practical base construction. Additionally, the collaborative education mechanism

with local cultural departments, intangible cultural heritage institutions, and cultural tourism enterprises remains underdeveloped, resulting in inadequate resource integration. These factors collectively hinder the sustained advancement of Li and Miao cultural integration in university music education.

4. Implementation Path of Integrating Li and Miao Culture into College Music Teaching from the Perspective of Aesthetic Education

4.1. Curriculum Reconstruction: Constructing a Four-in-One Curriculum System of Aesthetics, Culture, Skills and Practice

With aesthetic education at its core, we aim to break through the fragmentation of traditional curricula by establishing a well-structured and logically coherent music education system for the Li and Miao ethnic groups, achieving the goal of "inspiring wisdom through beauty and cultivating character through culture." The foundational aesthetic education curriculum includes courses such as "Introduction to Li and Miao Music Culture and Aesthetics" and "Aesthetics of Hainan Ethnic Music," which systematically explore the historical origins, aesthetic characteristics, cultural significance, and artistic value of Li and Miao music. These courses guide students in developing aesthetic cognition and cultivating perceptual abilities. The technical aesthetic education curriculum features courses like "Li Folk Song Singing and Aesthetics," "Miao Flying Songs and Lusheng Performance," and "Li and Miao Bamboo and Wood Instrument Techniques and Aesthetics," integrating vocal techniques, instrumental performance methods, and aesthetic interpretation. Through these practical training sessions, students experience the formal beauty and emotional depth of Li and Miao music. The practical aesthetic education curriculum includes project-based courses such as "Field Research and Fieldwork on Li and Miao Music," "Rehearsal and Aesthetic Expression of Li and Miao Songs and Dances," and "Li and Miao Music Composition and Aesthetic Education Practice." Students are required to conduct field research in Li and Miao villages, collect folk music materials, and adapt, create, and perform Li and Miao music, thereby enhancing their creative aesthetic abilities. The extended aesthetic education curriculum offers courses like "Integration of Li and Miao Music with Cultural Tourism" and "Digital Dissemination of Li and Miao Music," aligning with the cultural tourism industry development needs of the Hainan Free Trade Port. These courses guide students in exploring the dissemination and innovative applications of Li and Miao music in aesthetic education, achieving the integration of aesthetic education with professional skill development.

4.2. Faculty Empowerment: Building a Dual-skilled Teaching Team in Aesthetic Education and Li-Miao Culture

Faculty development is pivotal for integrating Li and Miao cultures into aesthetic education. This requires a comprehensive approach combining "recruitment, training, hiring, and research" to enhance teachers' pedagogical skills and cultural literacy. To strengthen the faculty, we will: 1) Recruit professionals with expertise in Li and Miao music heritage and regional cultural studies to enrich the teaching team; 2) Select outstanding music teachers for advanced training at institutions like Minzu University of China and Hainan Li and Miao Autonomous Prefecture, where they will systematically study Li and Miao music theory, techniques, and aesthetic education methods; 3) Engage intangible cultural heritage mentors to reinforce practical teaching by appointing national/provincial-level inheritors (e.g., folk song inheritors, bamboo and wood instrument makers) as adjunct professors who conduct on-campus teaching and practical guidance, integrating authentic Li and Miao musical traditions into classrooms. To elevate aesthetic education capabilities, we will: 1) Establish a research team dedicated to Li and Miao music pedagogy, regularly conducting studies on teaching methodologies, curriculum development, and educational approaches; 2) Organize faculty participation in events like the "Li and Miao Music Aesthetic Education Symposium" and "Intangible Cultural Heritage Campus

Observation" to exchange teaching experiences and improve educational standards. Furthermore, we will encourage research innovation to inform teaching practices by supporting teachers in developing Li and Miao music education reforms and cultural preservation projects, transforming research outcomes into teaching materials and course content to achieve a virtuous cycle of "research-teaching-inheritance."

4.3. Practice Deepening: Building a Three-Dimensional Aesthetic Education Practice Platform of "In-school-Out-of-school-Digital"

Through practical implementation, we establish a multidimensional and comprehensive platform for Li and Miao music aesthetic education, enabling students to enhance their aesthetic literacy and practical skills through immersive experiences. On-campus practice platform: The Li and Miao Music Aesthetic Education Training Center integrates teaching, training, performance, and creation. It features specialized areas including folk song performance studios, bamboo and wood instrument workshops, dance rehearsal halls, and cultural innovation studios. Equipped with traditional Li and Miao instruments (such as dingdong wood, nose flutes, mouth bows, and reed pipes), audio equipment, and creative tools, this center provides students with dedicated aesthetic education spaces. Regular events like the "Li and Miao Music Aesthetic Education Festival," "Li and Miao Folk Song Competition," and "Li and Miao Dance Performances" offer platforms for student showcases and cultural exchanges. Off-campus practice platform: We deepen school-community collaboration by partnering with cultural departments, intangible cultural heritage centers, and tourism enterprises in Li and Miao communities such as Hainan Li and Miao Autonomous Prefecture, Qiongzong, and Baoting. This collaboration establishes "Li and Miao Music Aesthetic Education Practice Bases." Students participate in fieldwork activities, interviewing folk artists in Li and Miao villages to collect authentic musical materials. They also engage in traditional festivals (e.g., Li's March 3rd Festival and Miao's Miao New Year) through performances and heritage displays, immersing themselves in the original aesthetic context of Li and Miao music. Through partnerships with cultural tourism enterprises, students join themed performances and cultural product development projects, bridging aesthetic education with industry needs. Digital Practice Platform: Expand the space for aesthetic education dissemination by utilizing digital technology to build a Li-Miao music aesthetic education network platform. Upload resources such as Li-Miao music audio, videos, teaching materials, and intangible cultural heritage documentaries, supporting online learning, interactive communication, and independent creation for teachers and students. Encourage students to use short video platforms (TikTok, Kuaishou, etc.) to produce Li-Miao music aesthetic education short videos and microfilms, spreading Li-Miao music culture. Utilize AI technology, virtual reality (VR), and other technologies to develop immersive Li-Miao music aesthetic education experience courses, allowing students to experience the original aesthetic charm of Li-Miao music without leaving home.

4.4. Evaluation Innovation: Constructing a "Diverse-Process-Comprehensive" Aesthetic Education Evaluation System

Guided by aesthetic education objectives, we break away from single-skill evaluation models to establish a "multi-stakeholder, process-oriented, comprehensive evaluation" system for Li-Miao music aesthetic education, comprehensively assessing students' aesthetic literacy and teaching effectiveness. The evaluation content is diversified: It incorporates aesthetic perception, cultural understanding, technical mastery, practical creation, and cultural dissemination of Li-Miao music. While assessing students' vocal and instrumental skills, it places greater emphasis on evaluating their interpretation of the aesthetic essence of Li-Miao music, cultural spirit perception, and innovative practical abilities. The evaluation adopts a process-oriented approach: Combining "formative evaluation + summative evaluation," with formative evaluation accounting for no less than 60% of the total

score. This includes classroom performance, fieldwork reports, practical assignments, and group collaboration outcomes. Summative evaluation is presented through Li-Miao music performances, creative works displays, and cultural interpretation papers, comprehensively reflecting students' learning processes and growth trajectories. The evaluation involves multiple stakeholders: A multi-stakeholder system of "teacher evaluation + student self-evaluation + peer review + intangible cultural heritage inheritors' evaluation + industry expert evaluation" is established. Li-Miao music intangible cultural heritage inheritors and representatives from cultural tourism enterprises are invited to participate in evaluations to ensure professionalism, objectivity, and practicality. The evaluation results are incentivized: Li-Miao music aesthetic education evaluation outcomes are incorporated into students' comprehensive quality assessment systems. Outstanding students receive commendations and rewards, and are recommended for participation in provincial and national Li-Miao music performances and competitions. Teachers' Li-Miao music aesthetic education teaching achievements and research results are included in professional title reviews and performance evaluation systems to motivate active participation from both teachers and students.

4.5. Mechanism Guarantee: Establish a Long-term Guarantee Mechanism of "Collaboration-Funding-Incentive"

A robust safeguard mechanism is crucial for the continuous integration of Li-Miao culture into university music and aesthetic education. This requires establishing a multi-stakeholder collaborative system with financial support and effective incentives. Collaborative Education Mechanism: Establish a "Li-Miao Music Aesthetic Education Teaching Guidance Committee" comprising representatives from university academic affairs offices, music conservatories, local cultural departments, intangible cultural heritage centers, and cultural tourism enterprises. This committee will jointly develop training programs, create course resources, establish practice bases, and evaluate teaching quality, forming a collaborative education framework involving "universities-local communities-enterprises-intangible cultural heritage." Financial Support Mechanism: Universities should establish special funds for Li-Miao music aesthetic education reform, covering curriculum development, faculty training, practice base construction, and hiring intangible cultural heritage inheritors. They should actively seek financial support from local governments and cultural tourism enterprises to jointly build Li-Miao music aesthetic education heritage bases, ensuring funding for educational reforms. Incentive Mechanism: Universities should implement specialized incentive policies, offering preferential professional title evaluations, performance bonuses, and honorary recognitions to teachers who excel in Li-Miao music aesthetic education reform, curriculum development, practical teaching, and scientific innovation. Financial support and promotion opportunities should be provided for outstanding student compositions and practical achievements to boost participation enthusiasm. Resource Integration Mechanism: Strengthen collaboration with Hainan Museum, Li-Miao Culture Research Center, and digital cultural enterprises to integrate Li-Miao music literature, intangible cultural heritage resources, and digital technologies. Establish a Li-Miao music aesthetic education resource database to achieve resource sharing and efficient utilization.

5. Conclusion

The integration of Li and Miao cultures into university music education through aesthetic education represents a crucial initiative to fulfill contemporary aesthetic education requirements, preserve regional cultural heritage, and enhance students' comprehensive competencies. This approach holds significant aesthetic value and practical feasibility. To address current challenges including fragmented curricula, insufficient faculty expertise, limited practical experience, monolithic evaluation systems, and inadequate support mechanisms, the following measures can effectively resolve these issues: establishing a

four-dimensional curriculum framework encompassing aesthetics, culture, craftsmanship, and practice; cultivating dual-skilled faculty teams specializing in both aesthetic education and Li/Miao cultural studies; developing a three-tiered aesthetic education platform integrating on-campus, off-campus, and digital resources; implementing a diversified, process-oriented, and comprehensive evaluation system; and creating a sustainable support mechanism featuring collaborative efforts, funding mechanisms, and incentive programs. These strategies will facilitate the deep integration of Li/Miao culture with university music education.

As pivotal institutions for aesthetic education and cultural preservation, universities should leverage their regional strengths to fully harness the educational value of Li and Miao music culture. By exploring innovative integration approaches, they can ensure this cultural heritage takes root and thrives in university aesthetic programs. Such efforts will not only enhance students' aesthetic literacy and cultural confidence but also drive the dynamic preservation and innovative development of Li and Miao traditions. Ultimately, this will contribute to the cultural development of Hainan Free Trade Port and the sustainable inheritance of China's outstanding traditional culture.

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