

A Study on the Dissemination Mechanisms of Chinese Music Art in the Digital Media Ecosystem

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ABSTRACT

With the rapid advancement of digital technology and the transformation of the media landscape, the dissemination of Chinese musical arts faces unprecedented opportunities and challenges. Against this backdrop, emerging digital platforms have pioneered novel pathways for this ancient art form to connect with contemporary audiences. This paper, therefore, explores the specific dissemination mechanisms of Chinese musical arts within the digital media ecosystem, meticulously analyzing its multi-party collaborative operational model, content innovation presentation strategies, and precision-targeting channel networks. It aims to provide methodological references for more effectively revitalizing and preserving Chinese music in the contemporary era.

KEYWORDS

Chinese musical arts; Digital media; Collaborative dissemination; Targeted outreach

1 Introduction

The widespread adoption of the internet, mobile devices, and social platforms has revolutionized how people access information, profoundly reshaping cultural creation, dissemination, and consumption patterns. Concurrently, the influence of traditional ethnic music—performed live or through recordings—has waned, as younger generations are increasingly drawn to diverse digital content. Consequently, these valuable regional musical resources struggle to find appreciative audiences. However, the digital environment has broken through time and space constraints, enabling the dissemination of outstanding traditional cultures like the guzheng, pipa, and Kunqu opera to a broader audience. Against this backdrop, it is crucial to deeply analyze how to disseminate conventional Chinese music in the new context effectively. Effective dissemination can revitalize traditions, reawakening melodies dormant in ancient texts and museums to resonate within contemporary life. This allows them to become integral to modern emotional expression and cultural identity. Consequently, this paper will explore the dissemination logic and practical pathways of Chinese musical arts within the digital media ecosystem. It aims to offer methodological insights for understanding contemporary cultural transmission, promote effective dissemination, and promote China's outstanding musical and artistic heritage.

2 Foundational Theory of Digital Media Ecosystems and Chinese Music Art Dissemination

2.1 The Essence and Characteristics of Digital Media Ecosystems

The digital media ecosystem constitutes a vast and complex environment built upon elements such as platforms, algorithms, content creators, ordinary users, and the immense amounts of data generated. It enables anyone with a handheld smart device and internet access to become a content creator and disseminator, generating a torrent of user-generated content^[1]. For instance, a music enthusiast can film their performance, upload it online, and allow others to view, comment on, and even adapt it further, greatly enriching cultural expression. Networked structure stands as one of the most defining characteristics of the digital media ecosystem. Every user, every piece of work, and every platform serves as a crucial node within it, interconnected through mutual following, sharing, liking, and algorithmic recommendations. Algorithms play a pivotal role in analyzing user behavior data to establish new connections and precisely deliver specific content to interested audiences. Beyond this, the digital media ecosystem encourages deep user involvement in content creation and dissemination. Take traditional Chinese folk songs as an example: within the digital environment, they can be reimagined by diverse users into pop music adaptations, significantly enriching the songs' meaning and depth while laying a solid foundation for the dissemination of Chinese musical art.

2.2 Types of Chinese Musical Arts and Constituent Elements of Dissemination Mechanisms

Chinese musical arts have developed rich and unique art forms through historical accumulation. Traditional folk music, relying on distinctive national instruments such as the flute, erhu, pipa, and guzheng, has produced instrumental masterpieces like "Spring River Flower Moon Night" and "Ambush on Ten Sides," which depict artistic realms and express emotions. Opera music represents a comprehensive art form integrating music, literature, and performance. Beijing Opera, Kunqu Opera, and Yue Opera all center music as their primary narrative and expressive medium, showcasing

distinct regional cultural characteristics. Ethnic vocal music is an art of the human voice, encompassing forms like Qinghai's "Hua'er," Shaanbei's "Xintianyou," and music styles inscribed on the Intangible Cultural Heritage list ^[2].

Within the digital context, the dissemination mechanism of Chinese musical arts comprises the elements of "disseminators - content - channels - audience - feedback." Regarding disseminators, the traditional pillars—professional art troupes, renowned performers, and authoritative cultural institutions—have joined a new generation of young conventional musicians leveraging new media for promotion, grassroots theater troupes, and countless ordinary netizens passionate about traditional music. This has broadened the dissemination sources of Chinese musical arts. In terms of content, to adapt to new media characteristics and user habits, lengthy operas are edited into highlights of memorable arias; guzheng music undergoes cross-genre adaptations with pop and electronic music, effectively enhancing its appeal in the contemporary digital environment. Distribution channels have gradually shifted to streaming music platforms (e.g., NetEase Cloud Music), comprehensive video websites (e.g., Bilibili, Douyin), social media (WeChat, Weibo), and various online communities. Audiences express preferences through likes, saves, and shares, further driving dissemination. Feedback mechanisms allow disseminators to analyze metrics like view counts, likes, comment section engagement, and derivative content volume to identify preferred content and formats. This enables timely strategy adjustments that significantly enhance dissemination precision.

3 Specific Dissemination Mechanisms of Chinese Music Arts in the Digital Media Ecosystem

3.1 Collaborative Dissemination Mechanism Involving Multiple Stakeholders

Within the digital media ecosystem, official cultural departments, professional arts institutions, and national-level performing arts groups prioritize content professionalism and artistic depth. The China National Ethnic Orchestra regularly releases full-length classic ethnic orchestral works online, accompanied by professional instrument introductions and musical background commentary, offering audiences a comprehensive window into traditional music culture. The National Centre for the Performing Arts' series of online concerts leverages high-definition live streaming technology to bring professional performances—previously accessible only in specific theaters—into millions of homes, subtly enhancing the public's musical literacy ^[3]. Beyond official initiatives, market forces like NetEase Cloud Music and QQ Music have stepped in through "artist support programs." These initiatives provide emerging independent musicians creating Chinese-style music with traffic boosts, financial backing, and professional training, helping them transition from obscurity to broader stages. Moreover, users on short-video and community platforms like Douyin and Bilibili have contributed to spreading Chinese musical artistry. For instance, a Gen Z girl playing the pipa on French streets with her song "How Can I Not Sigh" drew many foreigners to stop and admire. Among the onlookers, some were young people curious about the pipa. Still, more were older French individuals who possessed a deeper understanding of traditional instruments and could truly appreciate these melodies steeped in historical resonance. Other users ingeniously integrate erhu and suona performances into everyday scenes, pairing the family's comedic moments with lively suona melodies. This approach reveals the instruments' approachable, humorous side, further aiding the dissemination of Chinese musical art.

3.2 Presentation and Dissemination Mechanisms for Content Innovation

In terms of content formats for Chinese musical art, many ethnic instrumental works now feature meticulously produced music videos. The synergy of visuals and sound creates a complete artistic atmosphere, helping listeners better grasp the emotions and scenes depicted in the music. Simultaneously, numerous online videos have emerged that explain traditional music theory, instrument history, and playing techniques in an accessible and easy-to-understand manner, satisfying audiences' deeper cognitive needs beyond mere appreciation. Content creators now tailor videos for diverse audiences. For youth raised with the internet and video games, the popular online game *Honor of Kings* launched a game skin themed around Dunhuang flying apsaras, featuring background music heavily incorporating ancient instruments like the konghou and bili. Young players thus naturally encounter traditional timbres during their entertainment. In promoting Chinese music globally, YouTube videos narrate the historical journey of the pipa's introduction to China via the Silk Road. These narratives seamlessly transition into performances of the iconic piece "Ambush on Ten Sides," immersing viewers in broader cultural narratives and showcasing the uniqueness of Chinese arts and culture.

3.3 Channel Mechanisms for Targeted Outreach

In the digital era, Chinese musical artistry has proactively integrated into public leisure and entertainment consumption scenarios, initiating cross-disciplinary fusion while leveraging innovative technologies to deliver precision-targeted content services. Film and television serve as exemplary practitioners: in the drama "The Longest Day in Chang'an," tense background music and the deep tones of the flute seamlessly blend with plot and visuals, constructing a narrative space that is both suspenseful and steeped in ancient charm. Audiences can effortlessly immerse themselves in the musical experience without conscious effort. Video games serve as another vital cross-platform medium for musical artistry. For instance, the open-world game *Genshin Impact* extensively incorporates traditional Chinese instruments like

the erhu, dizi, and guzheng, allowing players worldwide to experience the allure of Chinese music while gaming. Moreover, short-video platforms have facilitated the precise dissemination of Chinese musical artistry. Thematic challenges like the "Folk Music Variations Challenge" invite users to perform popular music pieces using traditional instruments^[4], introducing folk music to the public in a more accessible and engaging manner.

4 Optimizing the Dissemination of Chinese Music and Art in the Digital Media Ecosystem

4.1 Building an Integrated "Culture + Technology" Dissemination System

The key lies in deeply integrating technology and culture to revitalize Chinese music and art within the digital media ecosystem. This requires efforts to create immersive experiences and advance educational inheritance. Regarding immersive experiences, music enthusiasts wearing VR headsets can instantly "travel back in time" to an ancient scholar's gathering. A virtual qin player performs before them, allowing users to hear the subtle vibrations of each note and observe the performer's elegant fingering techniques from any angle. Feel the rising incense smoke from the censer, and hear the occasional bird song outside the window. This allows them to experience the essence and charm of traditional Chinese musical art with a mindset closer to that of ancient creators and appreciators^[5].

Regarding inheritance and teaching, learning conventional instruments like the pipa and erhu requires years of practice, much of which involves tedious foundational training. Beginners also struggle to self-assess the accuracy of their fingering and pitch. Learners can download AI-powered intelligent practice companion apps on their phones to address this challenge. When finger placement deviates, the app immediately provides gentle voice prompts, while the screen clearly displays pitch curves compared to standard tones.

4.2 Building a Tiered, Contextualized Content Matrix

Promoting Chinese musical arts for youth audiences requires seamlessly integrating folk music elements into familiar, relatable daily scenarios. For instance, the pipa's rapid finger-rolling technique or the guqin's crystalline harmonics can be transformed into rhythm points in video games. This allows young people to unconsciously become familiar with these instruments' characteristic timbres and rhythmic patterns while gaming. Online instrument experience camps can adopt the narrative style of popular video bloggers, first teaching participants to play a theme song from a hit anime on the erhu, then guiding them to explore the story behind the theme song. A series of livestreams of music-themed cultural tourism should be planned for overseas audiences. The broadcast would transport global viewers to Jiangnan water towns, where they sit aboard black-roofed boats, listening to the gentle, melodious tones of Suzhou Pingtan as oars slice through the water. The war scenes depicted in the pipa piece "Ambush on Ten Sides" would be interwoven with live footage of ancient battlefield ruins. The soaring melodies of Qinqiang opera blend with the rugged landscapes of the Loess Plateau, immersing international audiences in the emotional and spiritual essence of the music within its context. This approach enhances the communicative power and appeal of Chinese musical artistry.

5 Conclusion

Within the digital media ecosystem, the dissemination of Chinese musical arts has evolved into a complex network involving collaborative participation from multiple stakeholders—including government bodies, market forces, and end-users. This network achieves precise audience reach through continuous innovation in content formats, leveraging cross-platform channels and intelligent algorithms. Within this framework, highbrow art finds its way into everyday life through popularized and contextualized approaches, while grassroots creative vitality infuses classics with contemporary relevance. The dissemination of Chinese musical arts will undergo deeper integration with cutting-edge digital technologies. Building a more inclusive, interactive, and sustainable digital ecosystem will significantly advance the global reach of Chinese music.

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