

## *Original Paper*

# Beyond Reading: Exploring Multicultural Services in University

## Libraries Guided by Musical Aesthetics

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### **Abstract**

*University libraries, as the core site for cultural inheritance and education in universities, are important cultural spaces for teachers and students to expand their knowledge and improve themselves. They are also key bridges for higher education to promote cultural construction and the development of spiritual civilization. Music, as an art form that transcends language and culture boundaries, not only provides readers with profound spiritual nourishment, but also its aesthetic symbols and cultural connotations are widely permeated in life and learning scenarios, exerting positive educational value. Recently, university libraries have gradually broken through the limitations of traditional document services and explored innovative paths of diversified education through music as a medium. This article, based on the orientation of aesthetic cultivation in music, systematically reviews the background logic of music aesthetic leading the diversified cultural services of libraries, providing practical paths for university libraries to transform from a “document-centered” model to a “moral education cultural space”, and helping to improve and enhance the quality of university aesthetic education and cultural services.*

### **Keywords**

*university library, music aesthetics, multicultural services, educational function, comprehensive literacy*

### **1. Introduction**

In reply to senior experts at the National Library in September 2019, China’s President Xi Jinping stated that libraries are an important indicator of a country’s cultural development level, and they are also an important place for nourishing the national spirit and fostering cultural confidence. As an indispensable auxiliary department of universities, libraries undertake the dual tasks of serving teaching

and research. They are important bases for universities to cultivate high-quality comprehensive talents and conduct scientific research.

## **2. Result and Discussion**

### *2.1 The Educational Functions of University Libraries*

Mr. Yu Mingdi once wrote in his article: “The educational function is the core function of university libraries”. Although under the new circumstances the focus of university library work is shifting, the core concept of collaborative education has remained unchanged. In the traditional view, the most prominent characteristics of libraries were information storage and resource dissemination. Based on the characteristics of the programs offered by the university, libraries collect, organize, and manage documents, provide readers with inquiry, reference, and borrowing services for various professional materials, and ensure resource support for teaching and scientific research by faculty and students. Consequently, for a long period, the service content of library staff revolved around the key word “coordination”. In recent years, more and more universities have sought to improve, expand, and intelligently equip the educational spaces within their libraries during library construction. Driven by technological change and the demand for lifelong learning, the educational space of university libraries is no longer a traditional physical space but an overlap and interaction of multiple spaces. These changes have already demonstrated that readers’ demands for library services are no longer basic and singular. At the same time, the rapid development of society has made it clear that in the new era, national development requires innovative, practice-oriented, professional, and high-level composite talents with correct values. How to cultivate and strengthen their competitiveness as high-quality comprehensive talents to support national development is one of the core issues for universities. Focusing on this key point, library service concepts must be continuously upgraded. Libraries should work on the following aspects: change from passive to active service, reach out to readers, combine their own powerful information resource advantages, fully exercise subjective initiative, transform from simply coordinating with faculty and students in learning technology and knowledge to guiding them from multiple perspectives to enrich their cognition and promote the construction of self-worth, so that while improving themselves they can also better serve society.

#### *2.1.1 Providing Moral Education Guidance and Establishing Correct Values*

In China, the average age of university students is between 18 and 24, the early stage of youth. They are active in thinking, creative, and keen on pursuing new things, but their ideological foundation is not yet solid. After entering university, the living environment is relatively free and relaxed. As newcomers, they are exposed to complex social trends and ideologies, which can inevitably impact their cognition to varying degrees. As a key location for moral education on campus, libraries should use moral and ideological guidance as a foundation, convey positive and constructive thinking to students through effective means, guide students to establish correct life values, and cultivate them as the core strength

in building the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

#### 2.1.2 Cultivating Independent Learning Abilities

Before entering university, students face many course categories and generally heavy academic burdens. Their learning model is relatively uniform, with the dominant role of teachers and parents playing an important part. At the higher education stage, the learning model places more emphasis on self-awareness and autonomy. Students need to enhance their intrinsic motivation for learning, cultivate learning interests and independent learning habits, and be able to consider and adjust their development plans according to societal needs. Therefore, helping them form relatively accurate judgment, while also equipping them with certain professional abilities, innovative abilities, and practical skills, is also a focal point for libraries in exerting their educational functions.

#### 2.1.3 Strengthening Cultural Literacy and Enhancing Cultural Aesthetic Appreciation

The library is the central venue for cultural construction in universities, bearing the responsibility of spreading civilization and fostering cultural confidence. Culture is the blood of a nation, and abundant blood forms the foundation for the strength of a nation. To enhance the cultural literacy of college students, we should first guide them to recognize the culture of their motherland with a positive and affirmative attitude, and encourage them to study and understand it earnestly, maintaining a firm stance and generating a high sense of recognition within themselves; secondly, we should view the diversity of culture with an objective, rational and inclusive mindset, and learn to draw on the strengths of various cultures from around the world; finally, we should abandon the traditional indoctrination-based educational methods and create a rich cultural atmosphere, build a comprehensive cultural environment, and help college students complete the inheritance and purification of Chinese civilization in an imperceptible way.

#### 2.1.4 Shaping and Perfecting the Self

In a society with abundant material life, people's spiritual needs become even more pressing. Due to their age characteristics, university students' ideology and psychological development are not yet mature. Correct education that guides them to know themselves, shape themselves, and perfect themselves, and to learn to coexist and develop harmoniously with others and society, will benefit them for life in their future development. This shaping is highly individualized. What teachers can cultivate in the classroom is limited; students need to roam in a free environment, then find their own direction and delve deeply into it. As a supporting department for education, the library should consider how to use personalized services to attract university students to enter the library and stay there, thus enabling the library's educational functions to be exerted more thoroughly.

## 2.2 *Using Music as a Medium*

### 2.2.1 Cultivating Aesthetic Ability, Building a Sense of Order, and Strengthening the Moral Foundation

Aesthetic ability is a person's comprehensive psychological capacity to perceive objective things. Whether an individual possesses high or low aesthetic ability is a fundamental factor that directly affects their capacity to feel, judge, and create beauty and goodness in life. Aesthetic ability can be shaped and cultivated. When we have accumulated relatively rich cultural knowledge and, under the influence of a favorable atmosphere, continuously practice and reflect, our cognition gradually sublimates and is internalized as aesthetic ability. Possessing good aesthetic awareness and ability, and learning to discover, appreciate, feel, and create beauty in life, can promote the harmonious development of oneself with nature and society.

The art of music has its own uniqueness. It uses musical scores as a medium, and through intangible sounds, it penetrates the auditory organs and acts upon human emotions and souls. The cultivation of aesthetic ability in music primarily manifests in the aspect of scientific cultural knowledge, which is to cultivate rational thinking for aesthetics. The birth of a musical work is inseparable from the historical environment in which it exists. The theme it intends to express and the core spirit it conveys need to be analyzed and understood by combining the creator's own experiences and the current social environment. These macroscopic information should be crushed and refined into basic elements of music such as notes, rhythms, and melodies, and then combined, arranged, and formed to create the overall picture of the musical work. The rational thinking for aesthetics relies on rich cultural connotations and the application of correct values to construct aesthetic standards and logical systems. One learns to judge things comprehensively from an objective perspective through analysis and thinking. Furthermore, music is an auditory art and an art of emotions. Art education directly acts on people's sensibility through art, enhances their aesthetic cultivation, and thereby shapes a healthy personality. Therefore, the cultivation of aesthetic ability in music is also reflected in the aspect of sensory cognition, and it is to cultivate aesthetic sensibility thinking. Emotion is an experience and also a capability. It follows the perception and experience of the self on objective things. At the same time, emotion is a reaction of the inner spirit and feelings. It can stimulate the brain to make instinctive and most in accordance with the inner feelings responses to the things encountered, and it is the most subjective impression. When the auditory organs of people receive the vibrations of sounds, emotions are aroused and awakened, and associations and thoughts are triggered in the brain. During this process, the rich innovative thinking and imagination generated are the soil that catalyzes the emergence of emotions.

Rationality and sensibility are dialectically unified. Rich emotions help us perceive people, society, and nature; the foundation and filtering of rational thinking help us transcend differences in time, culture, consciousness, and cognition to achieve unity in feeling. Every music work created with devotion,

every vigorous artistic practice activity, is born from real life, carrying the social values and cultural aesthetics that the creator wishes to convey. With strong appeal, they enable people to choose and accept beautiful things in a relaxed and pleasant environment with a positive and upward attitude, allowing abundant emotions to be infected and nurtured by beauty, continuously accumulating and consolidating good moral character, subtly enhancing aesthetic ability, and thereby promoting and improving the development and perfection of human comprehensive quality. As an important platform for educational activities and information services, libraries inevitably bear the responsibility of aesthetic education. Implementing aesthetic education for students is precisely the aesthetic appeal of their own value.

### 2.2.2 Enhancing Psychological Resilience and Fostering Optimistic Emotions

In recent years, the problem of sub-health mental states among university faculty and students has become increasingly serious. Living in a fast-paced society, everyone inevitably has to endure a great deal of pressure and solve many problems. University teachers face heavy teaching and research tasks, as well as the trivialities and conflicts of school life and family life. At the same time, university students, who are in a critical period but far from psychologically mature, face even more complex sources of pressure.

First, as students, academic work is paramount. Competitive pressure from coursework is one of the main causes of sub-health mental states among university students. Due to rapid socioeconomic development, both the demand for talent and the entry thresholds for various professions have been rising year by year. Moreover, the number of students entering university and graduating from university each year is also increasing. Therefore, whether it is academic competition within the university or job competition outside, the intensity is sufficient to cause depression and anxiety among students. Second, after entering university, students need to face many kinds of problems on their own. For example, in interpersonal communication: how to build a good relationship network and acquire the ability to interact with others. In emotional matters: how to establish rational and healthy emotional concepts without being disturbed by emotional confusion. In self-cognition: how to understand and analyze themselves rationally, clearly, and objectively, without being overly influenced by external evaluations. In fact, one of the main causes of negative emotions is an escapist mentality. Many difficulties are not actual situations but rather the imagination in our minds. Therefore, the first step in solving a problem is to face it directly. How to balance and handle these relationships requires, above all, a strong psyche and a positive attitude.

Music originates from life. Compared to other art forms, music-related cultural activities have inherent appeal, high acceptance, strong interactivity. Moreover, due to the nature of music, it brings many benefits and positive effects to physical and mental development. Firstly, music can express emotions and stimulate expression. By listening to music and participating in related cultural activities, negative emotions accumulated within us can be released, positive and positive psychological suggestions can

be introduced, thereby calming the mood and alleviating anxiety. Secondly, music can enhance communication and boost one's self-confidence. When we listen to musical works, we communicate with the creators; when we play musical instruments, we communicate with ourselves; when we participate in music performance activities, we communicate with the performers. During these cultural inputs and outputs, self-awareness is strengthened, loneliness and social anxiety in interpersonal communication are overcome, psychological empathy is generated, and the initiative to share and collaborate with others is enhanced, thereby improving and consolidating self-confidence.

### *2.3 Examples of Music Aesthetic Education in University Libraries*

Under the dual impetus of the aesthetic education promotion initiative and the cultural education of universities, many domestic university libraries have been actively exploring diversified cultural services oriented towards music aesthetics, and have formed distinctive practical models.

#### *2.3.1 University of Jinan Library*

Since 2023, the University of Jinan Library has organised a "Closing Time Music Show" event. It widely invites students with a certain level of artistic ability to serve as volunteers, performing musical works live at the library's closing time each evening instead of playing recorded closing music. This cultural activity makes full use of the library as a densely populated public space and carries out aesthetic education activities according to local conditions. It embodies the university's goal of educating through aesthetics and demonstrates the library's positive effect of educating through environment and culture. By embedding musical aesthetics into daily service processes, this light-weight, high-frequency aesthetic education activity effectively alleviates students' academic pressure and has formed a replicable, scalable campus aesthetic education paradigm.

#### *2.3.2 Harbin Institute of Technology Library*

On December 5, 2025, the Harbin Institute of Technology Library jointly held the "Tian Gong Qinyuan" first ancient guqin performance with Qinghui Guqin Society in the Warm Corridor Cultural Space. This event led teachers and students to travel through thousands of years through guqin performances, allowing them to experience the profound essence of Chinese traditional culture and adding a unique artistic touch to the campus. "Even though the sound stops, the lingering echo continues." The successful holding of this guqin performance not only enabled teachers and students to experience the charm of guqin art up close, but also sparked their love for and awareness of the inheritance of Chinese traditional culture, allowing the cultural heritage to continue perpetually.

#### *2.3.3 Peking University Library*

The Science-Art-Culture Exchange Service of Peking University Library aims to leverage the comprehensive resources of Peking University as a multi-disciplinary university, and utilize the library's advantages in information dissemination in science, art, and culture to create distinctive models of scientific exchange services, artistic exchange services, and comprehensive exhibition services. It also aims to build an influential brand of science-art-culture exchange services. In 2024, the

library of Peking University grandly launched the “Music Sounds” series of lectures. Inviting renowned experts in the field of music, it conducted in-depth discussions on the history, theory, and innovative practices of different music forms in modern society. This initiative promoted cross-disciplinary interpretations of music with disciplines such as literature, history, and philosophy, fully demonstrating the cultural leadership of research-oriented libraries and providing a benchmark model for the innovation of diversified cultural services in high-level university libraries.

#### 2.3.4 Inner Mongolia Normal University Library

On September 1st, 2025, the library of Inner Mongolia Normal University held a “Remember History, Reflect on Revival” theme exhibition on the Anti-Japanese War and a “Music Melody, Artistic Education” music event to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People’s Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. Through the “history + reality”, “static + dynamic” forms, music art was combined with the history of the Anti-Japanese War. Through the dual experience of “hearing + seeing”, the national pride and patriotic sentiments of teachers and students were enhanced. This series of activities relied on the rich collection resources of the library, integrated red historical documents, classic works with music performances and artistic creations, and through the innovative way of “cultivating people through culture and educating people through art”, guided college students to deeply understand the connotation of red culture in immersive experiences, laying a solid ideological foundation for achieving growth and success.

### 3. Summary

By reviewing the practical cases of domestic university libraries, it can be seen that empowering service innovation with music aesthetics can effectively drive university libraries to transform from traditional document services to aesthetic education spaces and cultural venues. In the future, university libraries should continuously deepen the organic integration of music with reading, space, activities, and resources, continuously expand service boundaries, enrich cultural connotations, and truly achieve education through beauty and soothing the soul, making libraries a comprehensive educational platform that combines knowledge dissemination, aesthetic experience, and spiritual nourishment.

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