

## *Original Paper*

# The Significance and Strategies of Integrating Ethnic Music into Music Education

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### ***Abstract***

*This paper aims to analyze the significance and strategies of integrating ethnic music into music education, and explore the practical dilemma of the gradual marginalization of traditional culture in contemporary music education. The study finds that integrating ethnic music into music education is conducive to strengthening cultural identity, enriching the connotation of aesthetic education, and expanding teaching resources. However, there are also prominent problems in the current process of promoting teaching development, including insufficient supply of curriculum content, an obvious gap in teachers' competence, and outdated teaching methods. Based on the problems encountered in the implementation process, this paper proposes a systematic integration path relying on the reconstruction of the curriculum system, supported by teacher training, and empowered by digital technology, so as to provide a theoretical reference for promoting the in-depth integration of ethnic music and music education.*

### ***Keywords***

*Music Education, Ethnic Music, Teaching Significance*

## **1. Introduction**

With the in-depth development of the multicultural pattern, music education has also ushered in a new and structural adjustment. In the traditional teaching system, Western music dominates classroom teaching, while ethnic music is often simplified as decorative background knowledge and fails to receive genuine attention. It remains at a low level in terms of content proportion, class hour allocation, and student participation. At present, excellent traditional music of all ethnic groups should be taken as an important part of music teaching. Promoting ethnic music and understanding the diversity of musical cultures should be listed as the basic concepts of the curriculum, emphasizing policy attention and teaching implementation to reduce the gap. This will enable ethnic music to demonstrate its value in

contemporary music education and realize the sustainable development of music education.

## **2. Multiple Significances of Integrating Ethnic Music into Music Education**

### *2.1 Consolidating the Foundation of Cultural Identity*

Traditional ethnic music is never merely a combination of sounds; it accumulates a group's long-term perception of the world, expression of emotions, and aesthetic judgment of order. As the condensation of a nation's ideology, culture and aesthetic art, ethnic music contains rich humanistic implications and values. When students contact, sing and appreciate the musical works of their own nation in class, they gain not only a melody, but a sense of cultural belonging. Compared with the transmission of traditional musical knowledge, ethnic music can transform abstract cultural identity into perceptible emotional experience, which helps to spread and promote national culture and enhance national cohesion and identity. Ethnic music education has long been an indispensable path in cultivating cultural identity, providing the most micro and solid population foundation for national cultural security.

### *2.2 Enriching the Value Dimensions of Aesthetic Education*

Music education has the function of "educating people through beauty". However, many teachers unconsciously tend to adopt a single Western standard in aesthetic education teaching. The introduction of ethnic music into classrooms constitutes a powerful correction: it reminds teachers, students and even the entire education system that beauty is diverse and aesthetic judgment cannot be separated from specific cultural contexts. Therefore, contemporary music education needs to construct a pluralistic value system covering moral, intellectual and aesthetic education. Once students' perception of beauty is freed from the constraints of a single standard, music education will be truly inclusive and creative. Moreover, ethnic music exposes students to aesthetic values that include not only musical styles and connotations, but also social and life history, recording ordinary people's labor, parting, reunion and expectations. When appreciating these works, students perceive not only the beauty of musical forms, but also a sense of life deeply rooted in daily life. The historical memory and social emotions carried by ethnic music works are also indispensable resources for aesthetic education. They can touch students' hearts and imperceptibly guide their values, achieving the goal of ideological and political education through courses.

## **3. Systematic Strategies for Integrating Ethnic Music into Music Education**

### *3.1 Reconstruction of Curriculum System and Integration of Content Resources*

The basic carrier of integrating ethnic music into music education is curriculum content. Its reconstruction does not simply mean adding more ethnic music pieces to music classes, but fundamentally changing the subordinate status of ethnic music in the curriculum structure. In terms of content organization, efforts should be made to overcome the problems of random selection and fragmented arrangement of ethnic music pieces in textbooks. Thematic modules should be established according to cultural regions or musical genres, enabling students to form a relatively complete cognitive picture in unit learning. For example, a series of special topics such as "Folk Songs of the Yellow River

Basin" and "Appreciation of Traditional Opera Vocal Modes" can be designed. In these special topics, students can gradually accumulate more structured knowledge about ethnic music rather than fragmented knowledge within teaching hours following the path of "cultural background-musical characteristics-classic works-experiential practice". The construction of the curriculum system also requires the development and utilization of local musical resources. China has a vast territory with unique musical traditions in different regions. Incorporating them into the curriculum and applying local ethnic music to teaching can activate students' local experience and realize the differentiated supply of curriculum content. Practice shows that an effective connection mechanism can be established between local ethnic music resources and school curricula. Education authorities and schools at all levels should provide corresponding institutional guarantees and resource support, so that music education can truly take root in local folk music and transform traditional music into vivid and perceptible teaching content.

### *3.2 Systematic Improvement of Teachers' Ethnic Music Literacy*

The integration of ethnic music into music education requires the improvement of teachers' professional literacy. At present, the structural deficiency of ethnic music teaching ability in the teaching staff is the most prominent problem restricting the integration effect. Objectively speaking, most music teachers are more familiar with the Western music system, but have limited knowledge of the modal theory, vocal ornamentation techniques and instrumental performance characteristics of ethnic music. Therefore, teachers tend to avoid difficulties and choose to teach Western music in class. Pre-service training and in-service training should be carried out for music teachers. In the pre-service training stage, normal universities and music conservatories should analyze the current teacher training programs and curriculum structure, appropriately increase the proportion of ethnic music theory courses, and properly add practical modules such as traditional opera singing and ethnic instrumental performance in teachers' skill training. This will help teachers acquire more balanced knowledge and clarify the curriculum structure in the pre-service stage. In terms of in-service training, teachers can conduct in-depth learning in folk artists' workshops, teaching and research activities, and special seminars. In the learning process, teachers can realize the cognitive transformation at the conceptual level, understand that Western music theory is a paradigm rather than the only standard for understanding music, delve into the grammatical structure, aesthetic logic and inheritance methods of ethnic music itself, and improve teaching literacy (Jin Xuzhu, 2026).

### *3.3 Innovation of Teaching Methods and Diversified Exploration of Approaches*

Different from Western classical music, ethnic music requires matching teaching methods in music education, such as analytical teaching centered on accurately notated scores. Traditional ethnic music teaching mostly relies on teachers' oral instruction, improvisation and collective participation, which is difficult to improve teaching quality. At present, innovation should be explored at the practical level: First, deepen teaching through experiential learning. Different from other musical forms, ethnic music fully embodies "singing, playing, performing and dancing". Students can participate in it and actively perceive the holistic characteristics of ethnic music, rather than merely "appreciating" a musical segment

stripped of its original context as onlookers.

Second, invite more outstanding inheritors into music classrooms to form regular teaching. Folk artists bring not only repertoires and techniques, but also living cultural inheritance. The introduction of this resource can effectively make up for the capacity gap of traditional teachers in specific fields of ethnic music.

Third, promote project-based and interdisciplinary integration. In music teaching, project-based learning can be carried out with the theme of "Musical Heritage of Hometown". In the process of investigation, recording, sorting, creation and performance, students will naturally integrate music learning with local culture, historical knowledge, information technology and other fields, significantly improving learning motivation and depth.

### *3.4 Empowerment by Digital Technology and Collaborative Construction of External Ecology*

To ensure the improvement of music education quality, both internal and external reforms of education and teaching are needed. The ultimate effect of fully integrating ethnic music into music education largely depends on its benign interaction with cultural communication, technical tools and resource construction at the social level. The rapid development of digital technology has brought new possibilities for ethnic music education and changed the mode of educational development. Technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality and knowledge graphs can be adopted to change the teaching and communication modes of ethnic music from multiple levels and perspectives. A platform for the display and search of ethnic music resources should be built to realize the visual presentation of ethnic music from multiple dimensions such as musical rhythm and dance. Policy support should be given to the forward-looking layout of technological empowerment for the inheritance of ethnic music. Big data technology can also be used to build immersive virtual scenes, enabling students to intuitively perceive the organic connection between ethnic music and its original cultural environment, which is more vivid and profound than abstract background introduction. The construction of social and cultural ecology is also indispensable in ethnic music teaching. To prevent ethnic music education from being isolated in school classrooms, sufficient recognition and response should be obtained at the social level. The campaign of "Intangible Cultural Heritage Entering Campuses" can be promoted, and the education of excellent traditional Chinese culture can be incorporated into the government's supervision and evaluation system to form an institutional driving force. It is also necessary to integrate on-campus and off-campus resources, and continuously promote the extension of ethnic music from the limited space of classroom teaching to a broader social life scene, so that the integration of ethnic music into music education can truly become a sustainable cultural practice (Yang Feiyan & Hou Lei, 2026).

## **4. Conclusion**

To sum up, integrating ethnic music into music teaching is never merely an expansion of teaching content, but involves a deeper cultural stance and educational orientation. Starting from the practical situation of ethnic music in contemporary music education, this paper analyzes the multiple dilemmas it faces,

expounds its integration value and significance from three perspectives of cultural identity, aesthetic value and teaching resources, and puts forward a systematic countermeasure framework around four dimensions: curriculum system, teacher construction, teaching methods and technological empowerment. The promotion of integrating ethnic music into music education still faces many challenges. It requires stronger guidance and resource support from multiple perspectives, and continuous academic attention to practical dynamics, timely summarization of effective experience and prudent reflection on deficiencies, so as to promote the genuine integration of ethnic music into the daily texture of music education.

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