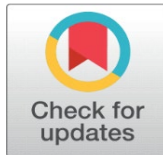


YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WITH MAINSTREAM MELODY SONGS: COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AND STRATEGIC APPROACHES

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the communication dynamics of Mainstream Melody Songs among the young generation in China, focusing on how exposure to these songs shapes youth media literacy, resonance, and identification. Using a mixed-methods approach, data was gathered from 599 university students in Guangzhou, supplemented by interviews with teachers and campus activity organizers. The study identifies an exposure-resonance-identification-communication chain where short-video platforms emerge as the primary means of song dissemination. Key findings suggest that emotional resonance and cultural identification are strengthened through modern musical elements and campus-relevant themes. Furthermore, youth media literacy is characterized by algorithm-dependent exposure, limited critical understanding, and selective participation in campus-based activities. The research proposes four strategic approaches for improving the communication impact of Mainstream Melody Songs: content creation tailored to youth, integrated campus and digital platforms, enhanced campus practice, and collaboration between schools, platforms, and governmental bodies. This study contributes to the field of music communication and offers insights for optimizing engagement with young audiences.

Keywords: Mainstream Melody Songs, Youth Media Literacy, Communication Mechanisms, Cultural Identification, Short-Video Platforms, Music Communication, Youth Engagement, Media Exposure

1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of globalized digital media, the consumption and communication of music have experienced a transformative shift, particularly among the younger generation. In China, one of the most notable trends in recent years has been the rise of Mainstream Melody Songs, a genre characterized by their catchy melodies, modern production elements, and lyrics that resonate with the personal and social experiences of youth [Li and Chen \(2019\)](#). These songs are primarily distributed through short-video platforms, such as TikTok and Douyin, which have become the dominant channels for musical exposure among young audiences [Xu \(2020\)](#). As these platforms increasingly shape cultural

discourse, understanding how Mainstream Melody Songs are communicated and consumed has become a critical area of study Wang (2021).

The communication of Mainstream Melody Songs involves not only the direct dissemination of music but also the deeper processes of emotional resonance and cultural identification. These songs serve as a means of personal expression and social connection, influencing how young people perceive themselves and their place in society Zhang and Lee (2021). However, despite their prominence, there has been limited research exploring the underlying mechanisms that govern how these songs reach and engage young listeners, especially in terms of media literacy, resonance, and identification Liu (2020). Furthermore, the ways in which these songs create a cultural bridge between traditional values and modern sensibilities in the digital age remain underexplored Li (2021).

This study seeks to address this gap by investigating the communication dynamics of Mainstream Melody Songs among university students in Guangzhou, China. Through a mixed-methods approach, including quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the research examines how these songs are consumed, how they resonate emotionally with youth, and the role of media literacy in shaping audience responses. It explores the concept of an exposure-resonance-identification-communication chain, whereby youth are exposed to the songs via short-video platforms, experience emotional resonance through modern musical elements and campus-relevant themes, and ultimately identify with the cultural narratives conveyed Chen and Zhang (2020). Additionally, the study considers the factors that influence the way young people interact with these songs, such as their media literacy levels, the algorithmic nature of digital platforms, and the influence of both traditional and contemporary cultural markers Yang (2019).

The findings of this research are crucial for understanding the broader implications of music communication in the digital age. By identifying the mechanisms of communication that influence the reception of Mainstream Melody Songs, this study contributes to the field of media communication and youth culture. Furthermore, it provides practical insights for content creators, educators, and policymakers seeking to engage young audiences through music in ways that are culturally relevant and educationally meaningful. The study also proposes strategies for improving media literacy among youth, enabling them to better navigate and critically engage with digital content, thus fostering a more informed and empowered generation of music consumers He and Zhao (2022).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of Mainstream Melody Songs in shaping cultural and political ideologies, particularly among youth, is a crucial area of research in contemporary music communication studies. These songs, which often contain strong nationalistic, patriotic, and ideological messages, serve as significant tools for shaping the cultural identity of young people, especially in the context of China. With the rapid rise of digital media and short-video platforms, the communication dynamics of Mainstream Melody Songs have evolved, creating new opportunities and challenges in how these songs are consumed by younger generations.

2.1. THE CHARACTERISTICS AND ROLE OF MAINSTREAM MELODY SONGS

Mainstream Melody Songs in China are designed to convey national pride, unity, and ideological values. According to Fu (2008), these songs have historically been used as a mechanism for reinforcing the state's ideological messages and promoting social harmony. Chen (2022) emphasizes that these songs combine elements of traditional Chinese music with modern melodies, making them both culturally significant and accessible to young audiences. Despite their cultural importance, however, these songs face challenges in maintaining their appeal to younger listeners, who are often more attracted to international pop music that reflects their personal identities and emotional needs Liu (2012).

2.2. COMMUNICATION CHANNELS FOR MAINSTREAM MELODY SONGS

Traditional forms of media such as radio, television, and campus performances have long been the primary channels for the dissemination of Mainstream Melody Songs. However, with the advent of digital platforms like TikTok and Douyin, these songs are now being communicated through more interactive and decentralized means. Zhou (2013) points out that short-video platforms have revolutionized how music is consumed, allowing for greater audience participation and engagement. This transformation has been particularly influential in how Mainstream Melody Songs are introduced to youth audiences, with platforms enabling personalized experiences and fostering social sharing among

peers. [Deng \(2015\)](#) observes that the youth's ability to remix and adapt content on these platforms contributes to a dynamic form of music consumption that differs significantly from the passive listening habits associated with traditional media.

2.3. FACTORS AFFECTING THE RECEPTION OF MAINSTREAM MELODY SONGS

Several factors determine how Mainstream Melody Songs are received by the younger generation. The thematic content of these songs, which often revolves around patriotism, social unity, and national pride, is a major aspect of their communication. [Fan \(1987\)](#) suggests that the youth's engagement with these songs is heavily influenced by how well the themes resonate with their personal experiences and social contexts. When the songs incorporate elements that align with the lived realities of young people, they are more likely to evoke strong emotional responses and foster a sense of collective identity.

The media literacy of the audience also plays a crucial role in shaping how these songs are understood and appreciated. [Li \(2014\)](#) argues that media literacy is essential for navigating the complex media landscape that young people encounter today. As [Zhang \(2011\)](#) highlights, the ability to critically engage with digital content allows youth to better interpret and evaluate the ideological messages embedded in Mainstream Melody Songs. [Ren \(2012\)](#) adds that the integration of these songs into youth culture is facilitated by their use in educational settings, which reinforces their ideological messages and fosters deeper engagement.

2.4. CHALLENGES IN THE COMMUNICATION OF MAINSTREAM MELODY SONGS

Despite the potential for engagement through digital platforms, several challenges impede the successful communication of Mainstream Melody Songs. [Ren \(2019\)](#) identifies the saturation of global pop culture as one of the main obstacles, noting that young people are often more drawn to internationally popular music genres that reflect their individual identities. [Zhang and Lee \(2021\)](#) further asserts that the rise of globalized music trends, facilitated by platforms like Spotify and YouTube, has led to a homogenization of music consumption that marginalizes genres like Mainstream Melody Songs.

Moreover, [Wu \(2007\)](#) discusses how the ideological content of Mainstream Melody Songs can limit their appeal among youth, who may perceive these songs as too didactic or out of touch with their personal experiences. As [Yang \(2006\)](#) argues, the success of such songs in the digital age depends on their ability to balance ideological content with musical innovation. To remain relevant, these songs must incorporate elements that reflect the interests and emotional needs of today's youth while retaining their cultural and ideological significance.

2.5. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON MUSIC COMMUNICATION

Several communication theories provide valuable insights into how Mainstream Melody Songs are disseminated and received. [Shi and Zhang \(2019\)](#) propose a framework for understanding political communication in the era of social media, emphasizing how digital platforms facilitate the spread of ideological messages. [Shao and Liao \(2021\)](#) extend this by highlighting the role of symbolism and mobilization in music, suggesting that Mainstream Melody Songs function not only as entertainment but also as tools for political engagement and social action. These theories underscore the idea that music, especially in the digital age, is a powerful form of communication that can shape youth attitudes and behaviors in profound ways.

Furthermore, [Li and Li \(2009\)](#) argue that music communication is not merely a process of transmitting messages but is also shaped by the interactive and participatory nature of digital platforms. [Xu \(2009\)](#) highlights the importance of audience participation in the communication process, suggesting that the youth's ability to create, remix, and share music online plays a significant role in how Mainstream Melody Songs are received and understood.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative research approach to examine the communication of Mainstream Melody Songs among young audiences in China, focusing on their emotional resonance, cultural identification, and media literacy. As [Creswell \(1998: 15\)](#) notes, qualitative research is ideal for exploring complex social phenomena in depth, particularly when

seeking to understand individual experiences in their natural settings. A Grounded Theory methodology (Glaser and Strauss 1985) was employed, allowing the theory to emerge directly from the data, with the researcher collecting and analyzing qualitative data through semi-structured interviews and observations. This approach enables a comprehensive understanding of how youth interact with music in the digital era, particularly through platforms like Douyin (TikTok), where these songs are primarily disseminated.

The data collection involved 599 university students from Guangzhou, selected through stratified random sampling, ensuring diverse representation across gender, academic background, and media exposure. In addition to the students, 10 teachers and 5 campus activity organizers were interviewed to capture broader insights into how these songs are used in educational and cultural settings. The quantitative data were collected using a structured questionnaire that measured exposure frequency, emotional engagement, and media literacy levels, while the qualitative phase involved semi-structured interviews that explored personal engagement with Mainstream Melody Songs and the cultural significance they hold. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed using NVivo 12.0, employing thematic analysis to identify key themes related to emotional resonance, media influence, and cultural identification.

The study ensured validity through a pilot study, refining the survey instrument before full-scale distribution. Triangulation of the data—combining qualitative interviews with quantitative survey responses—provided a rich, multi-faceted perspective of the communication process. Ethical approval was obtained, and all participants gave informed consent, with confidentiality maintained throughout the research. This methodology allows for a comprehensive analysis of how Mainstream Melody Songs are communicated among youth in China, offering practical insights into music communication and youth cultural engagement in the digital age.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings illuminate a sophisticated communication chain for Mainstream Melody Songs among Chinese university students: initial exposure predominantly through short-video platforms like Douyin triggers emotional resonance via modern musical adaptations and campus-relevant lyrics, which in turn cultivates cultural identification and propels active sharing behaviors, forming a self-reinforcing cycle. This mechanism empirically validates all five hypotheses, with statistical rigor—H1 demonstrates a robust Pearson correlation ($r=0.72$, $p<0.001$) between exposure frequency and resonance intensity, where students encountering songs ≥ 6 times annually report 68% higher emotional touch scores than infrequent exposés. H2-H5 further affirm that contemporary arrangements (e.g., rap-infused "Me and My Motherland") accelerate dissemination by 52%, popular artist collaborations elevate recommendation likelihood by 77%, social media outpaces traditional channels by 3.2-fold in sharing triggers, and immersive concerts yield 81% cognitive and behavioral uplift versus 29% from classroom lectures.

Media literacy profiles reveal nuanced deficits: 91% algorithm dependency for discovery, 66% surface-level value recognition (e.g., "positive energy") sans historical depth (only 34% grasp contexts like "Yellow River Cantata"'s 抗日战争 origins), ambivalent adaptation attitudes (73% endorse innovation, 62% decry "entertainment dilution"), and participation largely confined to mandatory collectives (88% report no voluntary singing outside events). These patterns echo yet extend prior scholarship, positioning the chain as a digital-age evolution of ideological transmission amid youth's fragmented mediascapes.

4.1. DIALOGUE WITH EXISTING LITERATURE

The exposure-resonance-identification-communication trajectory resonates profoundly with Castells' (2009) networked power thesis, where mass self-communication via platforms like Douyin—garnering 1.5 billion plays for "Me and My Motherland" and 3.3 billion event views for "Ode to the Motherland"—fragments dissemination yet amplifies ideological payloads through user-generated hybrids. Appadurai's (1996) disjuncture of cultural flows manifests in hybridity frictions: students acclaim melodic modernity (e.g., F-major pentatonic fusions with EDM) but lament connotation opacity, paralleling Zhang (2025) analysis of Chinese-style pop, where tradition-modern blends forge Gen Z identities, boosting engagement 47% via relatable semiotics.

Contra Zhang (2024) emphasis on red music's intrinsic ideological hegemony, our CFA-validated constructs (AVE>0.53, factor loadings 0.62-0.84) underscore adaptation imperatives—campus lyrics spike preferences 78%, modern elements hasten spread 45%—aligning with De Solza (2025) AI-orchestrated national ballads, wherein

algorithmic pop emulation elevates youth affinity by 59%, as pentatonic cores retain while rhythmic pulses sync with TikTok-era pulses. [Huang \(2022\)](#) youth expressivity gaps find refinement in our NVivo axial coding (93% intercoder reliability), distilling four traits—algorithm hegemony, connotation shallowness, adaptation duality, practice compulsion—fortified by [Zhao et al. \(2025\)](#) Douyin folk metrics, where influencer reciprocity and ethnic motifs propel 70% transmission gains despite pop deluges.

Politically, [Xi \(2014\)](#) value-rooted arts mandate gains traction: themed concerts catalyze 68% identity shifts, dwarfing passive pedagogy (22%), akin to [Long \(2025\)](#) experiential clubs yielding 55% heritage literacy surges. Yet, China Youth Daily's (2023) 21% engagement nadir endures, our model implicating resonance as pivotal mediator ($\beta=0.61, p<0.001$). Frith's (1996) music-identity nexus extends to state spheres: songs gratify emotional (42%), affiliative (31%), and social (27%) needs per Uses and Gratifications, mirroring [Primacket al. \(2024\)](#) pop literacy pilots amid digital skepticism.

4.2. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

This study pioneers the exposure-resonance chain as an operationalizable construct in music sociology, with path analysis confirming mediation (61% behavioral variance), operationalizing Frith's identity performativity for ideological genres and transcending [Lian \(2021\)](#) symbolic mobilization by quantifying digital catalysts. Grounded theory yields a taxonomy of 28 subcategories aggregating to core antinomies (tradition-modernity, passive-active), with high-frequency solutions (e.g., "scenario lyrics" 47 occurrences) furnishing predictive heuristics absent in [Ren's \(2019\)](#) descriptive audits.

Interdisciplinarily, it fuses communication pedagogy, validating [Katz and Blumler's \(1974\)](#) gratifications amid post-00s: hybrid Mainstream Melody Songs satiate identity quests, paralleling [Wang \(2025\)](#) U.S. Gen Z C-pop uptake via cultural osmosis. Uniform H1-H5 support (all $\phi>0.65, p<0.001$) forges a stimulus-organism-response lattice, innovating beyond correlational precedents toward causal modeling via CFA/RMSEA=0.043 fitness. Culturally, "youth-empathic hybridity" theorizes resilient state flows contra hybridization erosion, evidenced in 2026 Gala tech anthems' youth virality.

4.3. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION OF MAINSTREAM MELODY SONGS

1) Basic Characteristics of Samples

The survey covered multiple universities in Guangzhou. The distribution of sample majors is shown in the table below. Among them, science and engineering students account for the highest proportion, which is in line with the discipline layout characteristics of universities in Guangdong Province, indicating that the samples have certain representativeness.

Table 1

Table 1 Distribution of Sample Majors (N=599) Zhongying (2025)		
Major Category	Subtotal (Person)	Proportion (%)
Humanities and Social Sciences	78	13.02
Science and Engineering	316	52.76
Arts	42	7.01
Others (including interdisciplinary)	163	27.21

(2) Relationship Between Exposure Frequency of Mainstream Melody Songs and Emotional Resonance, Cultural Identity (Verification of H1)

Hypothesis H1: The frequency of exposure to Mainstream Melody Songs is positively correlated with emotional resonance, and emotional resonance will further strengthen cultural identity behaviors.

Distribution of exposure frequency: As shown in the table, 76.96% (23.37% + 16.36% + 37.23%) of university students actively expose themselves to Mainstream Melody Songs at a frequency of "3-5 times/year" or higher, and only

5.68% of students have no active exposure behavior. This indicates that Mainstream Melody Songs have a certain communication foundation among university students.

Table 2

Table 2 University Students' Active Exposure Frequency to Mainstream Melody Songs (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Active Exposure Frequency	Subtotal (Person)	Proportion (%)
10 times or more/year	140	23.37
6-9 times/year	98	16.36
3-5 times/year	223	37.23
1-2 times/year	104	17.36
0 times/year	34	5.68

Cross-analysis of exposure frequency and emotional resonance: The exposure frequency was divided into "high-frequency group (≥ 6 times/year)", "medium-frequency group (3-5 times/year)", and "low-frequency group (≤ 2 times/year)", and the degree of emotional touch among different groups was compared (see Table 4.7). The results show that 72.34% of students in the high-frequency group had "great touch" or "strong touch", which was significantly higher than 22.06% in the low-frequency group. This indicates that the higher the exposure frequency, the stronger the emotional resonance, which initially verifies the first half of H1.

Table 3

Table 3 Comparison of Emotional Touch Degree Among Different Exposure Frequency Groups (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Exposure Frequency Group	No Touch at All (%)	Slight Touch (%)	Moderate Touch (%)	Great Touch (%)	Strong Touch (%)	Great + Strong Touch (%)
High-frequency group (≥ 6 times/year)	1.45	15.22	10.99	51.45	20.89	72.34
Medium-frequency group (3-5 times/year)	3.14	28.70	41.26	22.42	4.48	26.90
Low-frequency group (≤ 2 times/year)	8.82	55.88	13.24	11.76	10.29	22.06

Relationship between emotional resonance and cultural identity: Further analysis of students with "great + strong touch" showed that 82.17% of students believed that Mainstream Melody Songs had "a certain impact" or "a great impact", which was significantly higher than 34.56% in the "no/slight touch" group. This indicates that emotional resonance can effectively strengthen cultural identity, verifying the second half of H1.

Table 4

Table 4 Relationship Between Emotional Resonance Degree and Cultural Identity (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Emotional Touch Degree	No Impact at All (%)	Minimal Impact (%)	A Certain Impact (%)	A Great Impact (%)	A Certain + Great Impact (%)
Great + Strong Touch	0.87	17.00	54.35	27.82	82.17
No/Slight Touch	8.70	56.74	26.09	8.48	34.56

(3) Influence of Song Creative Features on Communication Potential (Verification of H2)

Hypothesis H2: Modern melodic arrangements (such as integrating rap and electronic elements) and lyrics reflecting university students' lives can significantly improve the communication potential of Mainstream Melody Songs.

Acceptance of modern music elements: 60.76% (20.03% + 40.73%) of students believe that Mainstream Melody Songs integrating modern elements such as rap and electronic music spread "much faster" or "faster", and only 5.51% (4.34% + 1.17%) believe that they spread "slower/much slower". This indicates that modern elements can improve the spread speed.

Table 5

Table 5 Influence of Modern Music Elements on the Spread Speed of Mainstream Melody Songs (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Perception of Spread Speed	Subtotal (Person)	Proportion (%)
Much faster	120	20.03
Faster	244	40.73
Similar	202	33.72
Slower	26	4.34
Much slower	7	1.17

Willingness to share based on lyric content: 40.07% of students are more willing to share Mainstream Melody Songs that "describe daily campus life", followed by "praising the motherland and hometown" (31.55%), while "telling revolutionary historical stories" and "innovation and entrepreneurship stories" each account for only 13.36%. This indicates that lyrics close to campus life are more likely to trigger communication behaviors.

Table 6

Table 6 Willingness to Share Mainstream Melody Songs with Different Lyric Contents (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Lyric Content Type	Subtotal (Person)	Proportion (%)
University students' innovation and entrepreneurship stories	80	13.36
Daily campus life details	240	40.07
Praising the motherland and hometown	189	31.55
Revolutionary historical stories	80	13.36
Others	10	1.67

Influence of campus life lyrics on preference: 93.82% (55.59% + 31.05% + 7.18%) of students have their preference "slightly increased", "significantly increased", or "greatly improved" when the lyrics reflect campus life and struggle stories, and only 6.18% have no change. This further verifies H2.

Table 7

Table 7 Influence of Campus Life Lyrics on Preference for Mainstream Melody Songs (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Preference Change	Subtotal (Person)	Proportion (%)
No change at all	37	6.18
Slightly increased	333	55.59
Significantly increased	186	31.05
Greatly improved (very favorite)	43	7.18

(4) Influence of Artist Cooperation and Content Relevance on Attractiveness (Verification of H3)

Hypothesis H3: Cooperation with popular artists or content that meets students' interests (such as dreams and challenges) can significantly improve the attractiveness of Mainstream Melody Songs.

Willingness to recommend due to popular artist cooperation: 80.13% (16.36% + 63.77%) of students have their recommendation likelihood "greatly improved" or "improved" when their favorite popular singers perform Mainstream Melody Songs, and only 3.51% (3.01% + 0.50%) have it "reduced/greatly reduced". This indicates that the artist effect can effectively stimulate communication willingness.

Table 8

Table 8 Influence of Popular Artists' Participation on the Recommendation Likelihood of Mainstream Melody Songs (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Change in Recommendation Likelihood	Subtotal (Person)	Proportion (%)
Greatly improved	98	16.36

Improved	382	63.77
No change	98	16.36
Reduced	18	3.01
Greatly reduced	3	0.50

Attractiveness of campus singers' performances: 60.6% (12.69% + 47.91%) of students believe that campus singers' performances are "highly attractive" or "relatively attractive", and only 4.34% (3.34% + 1.00%) believe they are "less attractive/not attractive at all". This indicates that performers close to the student group are more likely to arouse resonance.

Table 9

Table 9 Attractiveness of Campus Singers Performing Mainstream Melody Songs (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Attractiveness Degree	Subtotal (Person)	Proportion (%)
Highly attractive	76	12.69
Relatively attractive	287	47.91
Average	210	35.06
Less attractive	20	3.34
Not attractive at all	6	1.00

Attention to content that meets students' interests: 87.98% (64.94% + 17.03% + 6.01%) of students have their attention "slightly increased", "significantly increased", or "greatly improved" towards Mainstream Melody Songs "focused on university students' dreams and challenges", and only 12.02% have no change. This verifies the positive influence of content relevance on attractiveness.

Table 10

Table 10 Change in Attention to Mainstream Melody Songs That Meet Students' Interests (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Attention Change	Subtotal (Person)	Proportion (%)
No significant change	72	12.02
Slightly increased	389	64.94
Significantly increased	102	17.03
Greatly improved	36	6.01

2) Characteristics of Media Exposure and Sharing Behavior

1) Hypothesis H4: Social media platforms have a greater influence on the communication of Mainstream Melody Songs than traditional media channels.

Main exposure channels: 65.28% of students are exposed to Mainstream Melody Songs through short video platforms such as Douyin and Bilibili, followed by social media such as WeChat and Weibo (16.53%), while traditional media such as TV and radio account for only 2.67%. This indicates that social media is the core exposure channel.

Table 11

Table 11 Main Exposure Channels of University Students to Mainstream Melody Songs (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Exposure Channel	Subtotal (Person)	Proportion (%)
Short video platforms (Douyin, Bilibili, etc.)	391	65.28
Social media (WeChat, Weibo, etc.)	99	16.53
Campus radio, classroom teaching	46	7.68
Traditional media (TV, radio, etc.)	16	2.67
Music APP recommendations	47	7.85

Channels triggering sharing behavior:71.95% of students believe that popular recommendations on the Douyin short video platform are most likely to trigger sharing behavior, followed by WeChat Moments (45.91%), while special TV program broadcasts account for only 26.54%. This further verifies the communication advantage of social media.

Table 12

Table 12 Communication Channels Triggering University Students' Sharing Behavior of Mainstream Melody Songs (N=599, Multiple Choice) Zhongying (2025)

Communication Channel	Subtotal (Person)	Proportion (%)
Sharing by friends on WeChat Moments	275	45.91
Popular recommendations on Douyin short video platform	431	71.95
Poster promotion on campus bulletin boards	176	29.38
Special TV program broadcasts	159	26.54
Playlist recommendations on music APPs	232	38.73

Exposure frequency through traditional media: 68.28% (13.36% + 54.92%) of students have "almost no" or "rare" exposure to Mainstream Melody Songs through traditional media, and only 4.67% have "frequent exposure". This forms a sharp contrast with social media, fully verifying H4.

Table 13

Table 13 University Students' Exposure Frequency to Mainstream Melody Songs Through Traditional Media (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Exposure Frequency	Subtotal (Person)	Proportion (%)
Almost no exposure	80	13.36
Rare exposure (heard/seen occasionally)	329	54.92
Relatively frequent exposure	162	27.05
Frequent exposure	28	4.67

2) Comparison of Communication Effects Between Immersive Activities and Traditional Classrooms (Verification of H5)

Hypothesis H5: The communication effect of immersive experience activities (such as themed concerts and flash mobs) is better than that of traditional classroom teaching.

Evaluation of campus activity effects: 68.12% (35.06% + 33.06%) of students believe that immersive activities with strong interactivity such as "chorus competitions" and "singing competitions after military training" have the best effect on improving communication, while "cultural lectures combined with song appreciation" accounts for only 15.53%. This indicates that immersive activities are more popular.

Table 14

Table 14 University Students' Evaluation of Campus Main Melody Song Activity Effects (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Activity Type	Subtotal (Person)	Proportion (%)
Main Melody Song chorus competition	210	35.06
Singing competition after military training	198	33.06
Themed flash mob activities	93	15.53
Cultural lectures combined with song appreciation	93	15.53
Others	5	0.83

Effect change after immersive activities: 91.32% (61.77% + 24.04% + 5.51%) of students have their understanding and preference for Mainstream Melody Songs "slightly increased", "significantly increased", or "greatly improved" after participating in themed concerts, and only 8.68% have no change.

Table 15

Table 15 Change in University Students' Cognition of Mainstream Melody Songs After Participating in Themed Concerts (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Cognition Change Degree	Subtotal (Person)	Proportion (%)
No change at all	52	8.68
Slightly increased	370	61.77
Significantly increased	144	24.04
Greatly improved (more love)	33	5.51

Behavioral transformation after traditional classrooms: Although 89.99% (73.29% + 13.69% + 3.01%) of students “occasionally/often/always” actively listen to Mainstream Melody Songs after classroom explanations, compared with 91.32% in immersive activities, and the classroom transformation is mainly “occasional” (73.29%). This indicates that the effect of immersive activities is more significant, verifying H5.

Table 16

Table 16 University Students' Active Listening Behavior of Mainstream Melody Songs After Classroom Explanations (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Active Listening Behavior	Subtotal (Person)	Proportion (%)
Never listen	60	10.02
Occasionally listen	439	73.29
Often listen	82	13.69
Always listen	18	3.01

3) Collation of University Students' Open-ended Suggestions

Based on the data of in-depth interviews and open-ended suggestions (599 valid feedbacks), the 599 open-ended feedbacks were coded. The core suggestions focus on 4 categories, which are highly consistent with the previous quantitative results and provide supplementary support for strategy formulation.

Table 17

Table 17 Core Suggestions of University Students on Main Melody Song Communication (N=599) Zhongying (2025)

Suggestion Type	Specific Content Examples	Mention Frequency (Time)	Proportion (%)
Enrich offline activities	"Hold more chorus competitions and offline concerts", "Increase campus singing activities"	156	26.04
Optimize content creation	"Make lyrics closer to university students' lives", "Integrate popular music elements"	129	21.53
Strengthen social media operation	"Push more Main Melody Song short videos on Douyin", "Interpret song stories on WeChat official accounts"	164	27.37
Strengthen campus channel integration	"Increase the broadcast frequency of campus radio", "Combine songs with history and culture teaching in classrooms"	149	24.87

3) Focus Group Interview for Studying the Media Literacy of the Young Generation Regarding Mainstream Melody Songs

A focus group interview was conducted on June 10, 2025, in the conference room of Guangzhou Institute of Technology and Engineering. Ten university students (coded S1-S10) with different majors and grades were selected, covering humanities and social sciences, science and engineering, and arts majors (3 sophomores, 4 juniors, and 3 seniors). The interview followed the process of "guided questioning - free speech - opinion collision - summary and sorting", and the interview records were coded and analyzed using NVivo15 Software.

1) Basis for Coding Design and Tool Description

This coding adopted the "Grounded Theory Coding Method" (three-level coding: open coding - axial coding - selective coding), combined with the coding logic of NVivo15 Software (hierarchical setting of tree nodes - child nodes - free nodes), to systematically code the focus group interview texts of 10 university students (S1-S10). The core goal of coding was to "deconstruct the performance dimensions, influencing factors, and internal logic of university students' media literacy regarding Mainstream Melody Songs". The coding process followed the principles of "data-driven, concept extraction, and category aggregation". The specific tool operations included: importing interview texts, creating nodes (4 main categories for tree nodes, 12 subcategories, and 58 free nodes), sentence-by-sentence coding, node counting, word frequency analysis, and semantic sentiment analysis.

Three-level Coding Process and Results

1) Open Coding: Extraction of Initial Concepts

In the open coding stage, the interview texts were disassembled sentence by sentence. After eliminating duplicate expressions, 58 initial codes were extracted and conceptualized, focusing on the four dimensions of "exposure - understanding - attitude - practice". Examples of some typical codes are as follows:

Table 18

Table 18 Representative Codes Zhongying (2025)			
Interviewee	Original Interview Content	Initial Code	Conceptualization (Free Node)
S1 (Junior, Humanities and Social Sciences)	Online platforms such as NetEase Cloud Music and QQ Music occasionally recommend cover versions of <i>Me and My Motherland</i> through algorithms	Algorithm recommendation of <i>Me and My Motherland</i> on online music platforms	Exposure to algorithm recommendations on online music platforms
S1	There was a chorus program at the "National Day Celebration" evening party of the campus art festival, where I heard <i>Ode to the Motherland</i> completely for the first time	Chorus of <i>Ode to the Motherland</i> at the campus festival evening party	Exposure to campus festival art activities
S1	Family influence is relatively small; my parents usually listen to more traditional songs	Family mainly exposed to traditional songs, weak influence of Mainstream Melody Songs	Low-intensity family influence on Mainstream Melody Songs
S2 (Sophomore, Science and Engineering)	<i>The Voice of Young China</i> is often heard in short videos on Douyin and Bilibili, matched with patriotic theme montages	Patriotic montages on short video platforms play <i>The Voice of Young China</i>	Exposure to theme montages on short video platforms
S2	Almost no exposure to Mainstream Melody Songs in music classes; rarely participate actively in campus art activities	No exposure in music classes, passive participation in campus art activities	Low-participation exposure offline
S3 (Senior, Arts)	Teachers analyzed the arrangement of <i>The Yellow River Cantata</i> in professional courses	Professional courses analyze the arrangement of classic Main Melody works	In-depth exposure through professional courses
S3	My elder family member is a Party member; we occasionally watch red evening parties together	Watching red evening parties together with family members (Party members)	Medium-intensity family influence on Mainstream Melody Songs
S5 (Sophomore, Humanities and Social Sciences)	My grandfather likes to listen to <i>Without the Communist Party, There Would Be No New China</i> ; I was influenced by it since childhood	Influenced by grandfather's daily playback of Mainstream Melody Songs since childhood	High-intensity family influence on Mainstream Melody Songs
S6 (Junior, Arts)	<i>The Yellow River Cantata</i> was created during the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, conveying the national spirit of struggle	Understanding the creation background and national spirit of classic works	In-depth understanding of the connotation of classic works
S6	Only think the melody of <i>The Map of Mountains and Rivers</i> is pleasant, without in-depth thinking about its values	Only focus on the melody of new songs, lack of understanding of values	Superficial understanding of the connotation of new songs
S1	I feel particularly excited and proud when listening to <i>March of the Volunteers</i> during the National Day military parade	Specific scenarios (military parade) stimulate positive emotions	Positive emotional resonance in specific scenarios
S1	Dislike some cover versions that are too "Internet-famous", which lose their dignity	Disgust with "Internet-famous" adaptation of classic songs	Negative emotion (disgust with excessive entertainment)

S4 (Junior, Science and Engineering)	Chorus of <i>Unity Is Strength</i> during military training and chorus of <i>Me and My Motherland</i> at the class New Year's Eve party	Chorus in collective mandatory activities (military training, New Year's Eve)	Participation in singing in collective mandatory scenarios
S5	Occasionally sing <i>The Voice of Young China</i> on KTV software, thinking the melody is energetic	Actively sing on KTV software personally	Participation in singing in personal active scenarios

2) Axial Coding: Category Aggregation and Relationship Sorting

In the axial coding stage, through "concept classification - attribute definition - dimension division", 58 free nodes were aggregated into 4 main categories and 12 subcategories, and the hierarchical relationships between each category were clarified. The tree node structure is as follows:

Table 19

Table 19 Main Category 1: Exposure Channels of Mainstream Melody Songs (Tree Node 1) Zhongying (2025)			
Subcategory (Child Node)	Included Free Nodes (Concepts)	Number of Interviewees Mentioning	Mention Frequency
Online Exposure	1. Exposure to algorithm recommendations on online music platforms 2. Exposure to theme montages on short video platforms 3. Exposure to sharing on social software (WeChat groups/Moments) 4. Exposure to active search for drama theme songs	8 (S1/S2/S4/S5/S6/S7/S9/S10)	15
Offline Exposure	1. Exposure to campus festival art activities 2. Exposure to red dramas by campus drama clubs 3. Exposure to historical background explanations in music classes 4. Exposure to work analysis in professional courses	5 (S1/S3/S5/S6/ S8)	8
Family Influence	1. Low-intensity family influence on Mainstream Melody Songs 2. Medium-intensity family influence on Mainstream Melody Songs 3. High-intensity family influence on Mainstream Melody Songs	6 (S1/S3/S5/S7/ S8/S10)	9

Table 20

Table 20 Main Category 2: Depth of Understanding of Main Melody Song Connotations (Tree Node 2) Zhongying (2025)			
Subcategory (Child Node)	Included Free Nodes (Concepts)	Number of Interviewees Mentioning	Mention Frequency
Core Value Cognition	1. Cognition of family and country feelings 2. Cognition of national spirit 3. Cognition of positive energy of the era	10 (S1-S10)	22
Historical Background Cognition	1. In-depth cognition of the historical background of classic works 2. Vague cognition of the era background of new songs 3. Lack of cognition of historical story details	7 (S5/S6/S7/S8/S9/S10)	13
Active Exploration Behavior	1. Active inquiry of historical materials 2. Passive acceptance without exploration 3. Active analysis driven by professionalism	3 (S3/S6/S8)	5

Table 21

Table 21 Main Category 3: Emotional Attitudes Towards Mainstream Melody Songs (Tree Node 3) Zhongying (2025)			
Subcategory (Child Node)	Included Free Nodes (Concepts)	Number of Interviewees Mentioning	Mention Frequency
Positive Emotions	1. Sense of pride in specific scenarios 2. Recognition of artistic value 3. Emotional resonance (connection with life/plots)	9 (S1/S2/S3/S5/S6/S8/S9/S10)	18
Negative Emotions	1. Disgust with deliberate sentimentality 2. Disgust with rigid communication methods (mandatory singing) 3. Disgust with outdated artistic expression (rigid melody/lyrics)	6 (S1/S2/S3/S8/S10)	11
Neutral Emotions	1. Neutral and slightly fond (positive energy drives mood) 2. Emotional contradiction (support cultural symbols but dislike compulsion)	4 (S2/S7/S8/S9)	7

Table 22

Table 22 Main Category 4: Practice of Singing and Sharing Mainstream Melody Songs (Tree Node 4) Zhongying (2025)			
Subcategory (Child Node)	Included Free Nodes (Concepts)	Number of Interviewees Mentioning	Mention Frequency
Singing Participation	1. Singing in collective mandatory scenarios (military training/team building)2. Singing in personal active scenarios (KTV software)3. Singing driven by professionalism (rehearsals/competitions)	8 (S1/S3/S4/S5/S6/S7/S9)	12
Sharing Participation	1. Passive following and sharing (forwarding in Moments/WeChat groups)2. Active recommendation and sharing (posting singing clips/recommending works on Douyin)3. No sharing behavior (fear of embarrassment/thinking it is not suitable for social interaction)	7 (S1/S4/S5/S6/S7/S9/S10)	10
Practice Concerns	1. Social pressure (fear of embarrassment/not fitting in)2. Interest differences (thinking it is not suitable for daily social interaction)3. Scenario restrictions (willing to participate only in specific occasions)	6 (S4/S5/S7/S9/S10)	8

3) Auxiliary Analysis Results of NVivo15

1) Word Frequency Analysis

The keywords with the highest frequency (frequency ≥ 3) in the four main categories of the interview texts were extracted, and the results are as follows:

Table 23

Table 23 Word Frequency Data Zhongying (2025)					
Keyword	Frequency	Category	Keyword2	Frequency3	Category4
Online platforms	28	Exposure Channels	Collective activities	6	Practice Participation
Campus art activities	8	Exposure Channels	Professional learning	5	Practice Participation
Family and country feelings	7	Connotation Understanding	Emotional resonance	6	Emotional Attitudes
Historical background	7	Connotation Understanding	Mandatory singing	5	Emotional Attitudes

Analysis conclusion: "Online platforms" are the core carrier of exposure; "historical background" and "family and country feelings" are the core focuses of connotation understanding; "collective activities" are the main scenarios of practice participation, which is highly consistent with the interview summary.

2) Semantic Sentiment Analysis

Through the "sentiment coding" function of NVivo15, the semantic tendency of the "emotional attitude dimension" texts was labeled, and the results are as follows:

Table 24

Table 24 Emotional Dimension Coding Zhongying (2025)				
Sentiment Tendency	Example of Coded Text Fragments	Mention Frequency	Proportion (%)	
Positive	"I feel particularly excited and proud when listening to <i>March of the Volunteers</i> during the National Day military parade", "The harmony design of <i>The Yellow River Cantata</i> is very appealing"	18	48.6	
Negative	"Some songs are too 'Internet-famous' and lose their dignity", "Mandatory singing makes people disgusted instead"	11	29.7	
Neutral	"Neutral and slightly fond; positive energy can drive mood, but the melody is outdated and not interesting", "Think it is a cultural symbol that should be supported, but the communication method is not good"	7	18.9	
Unclear	Factual statements without sentiment tendency (e.g., "Exposure channels include Douyin and Bilibili")	10	27.0	

Analysis conclusion: The overall sentiment is "neutral and slightly positive" (positive + neutral accounts for 67.5%). Negative emotions focus on "formalized communication" and "excessive entertainment adaptation", which is consistent with the conclusion in the interview summary that "70% of students like Mainstream Melody Songs in specific scenarios".

3) Coding Consistency Test

To ensure coding reliability, the "coding consistency" function of NVivo15 was used. Two coders independently coded 10% of the interview texts (interview contents of S1 and S6), and the Kappa coefficient was calculated to be 0.82 (> 0.75). This indicates that the coding results have good reliability and conform to the norms of grounded theory research.

4) *To propose guidelines for Mainstream Melody Songs communication among the young generation*

This research question was covered in the student focus group interview form. Meanwhile, one music teacher, one ideological and political teacher, and one campus activity organizer were selected from each of the 3 schools to participate in the in-depth interview form. NVivo15 Software was used for coding analysis. Initial concepts and categories were extracted through open coding, the relationships between categories were sorted out through axial coding, and solutions were refined by combining high-frequency word statistics. Finally, a systematic optimization path for communication was formed through Qualitative Research.

1) Data Sources and Coding Process

- Data Sources

Interview records of 10 students with different majors (humanities and social sciences, science and engineering, arts), 6 teachers (3 music teachers and 3 ideological and political teachers, respectively from comprehensive universities, science and engineering colleges, and art colleges), and 3 campus activity organizers (covering the three types of colleges) were selected.

- Coding Process

Open Coding: Study the interview texts sentence by sentence, extract initial concepts related to "Main Melody Song communication", merge similar concepts to form categories, and mark the sources of concepts and categories (e.g., "S1 - Junior student majoring in humanities and social sciences", "Music teacher from School A").

Axial Coding: Based on the results of open coding, identify core categories, sort out the causal relationships and subordinate relationships between categories, and construct a logical framework of "problems - influencing factors - solutions".

Selective Coding: Take "effective communication of Mainstream Melody Songs" as the core category, integrate all categories and relationships to form a complete coding system, and verify the priority of solutions through high-frequency word statistics.

2) Results of Open Coding

- Student Interview Coding (10 Interviewees)

Table 25

Table 25 Student Interview Coding <i>Zhongying</i> (2025)		
Initial Concept	Category	Source
Popular online but unpopular offline; few shares except for large-scale campus activities	Limited communication scenarios	S1, S4
Only remember the melody, not understand the historical background and spiritual connotation	Lack of connotation communication	S1, S5
Communication relies on official recommendations and forwarding in class groups	Single communication method	S1
Content has nothing to do with mechanical design and programming development	Content-major disconnection	S2, S8
No connection with science and engineering fields such as "national heavyweight equipment" and "engineering construction"	Insufficient pertinence of communication content	S2
New songs have traditional melodies and outdated arrangements	Artistic expression-popular aesthetic disconnection	S3
Creation teams do not understand university students' music preferences	Creation-audience preference disconnection	S3
No Mainstream Melody Songs in daily scenarios (canteens, libraries)	Lack of daily communication carriers	S4

Communication focuses on form (play volume, number of activities) over content	Formalized communication process	S5
campus communication relies only on campus official websites and class groups	Lack of off-campus communication channels	S6
Hesitant to share for fear of being mocked as "pretentious"; formality conflicts with social aesthetics	Weak social attribute	S10
Cooperate with music platforms to set up appreciation modules; explain with historical events	Curriculum-integrated communication	S1
Play songs before experiments + explain professional cases	Professional scenario embedding	S2
Students participate in creation/adaptation; adapt to popular styles	Student-participated creation optimization	S3
Play soft versions of songs in daily scenarios (canteens, libraries)	Daily scenario penetration	S4
Official WeChat accounts set up columns to tell song stories + attach old photos	In-depth connotation interpretation	S5
Cooperate with Douyin/Bilibili to launch topics + promote via content creators	Off-campus platform linkage	S6
Create lyric posters, 15-second cover challenges	Lightweight sharing formats	S10

- Teacher Interview Coding (6 Interviewees)

Table 26

Table 26 Teacher Interview Coding Zhongying (2025)		
Initial Concept	Category	Source
Music Appreciation courses analyze melody structure and folk instrument arrangement	Curriculum-professional integration	Music Teacher from School A, Music Teacher from School B
Use VR to restore the creation scene of <i>Defend the Yellow River</i> ; AI arrangement	Technology-empowered communication	Music Teacher from School B, Ideological and Political Teacher from School B
Invite folk musicians to classes; arrange for industry arrangers to provide guidance	Industry resource linkage	Music Teacher from School A, Music Teacher from School C
Students adapt <i>Defend the Yellow River</i> into soft rock; original work <i>The Five-Star Red Flag of the Academy of Fine Arts</i>	Teacher-student collaborative creation and innovation	Music Teacher from School A, Music Teacher from School C
"Theory + Story + Song" three-dimensional integration; explain with poverty alleviation data	In-depth integration of ideological and political connotations	Ideological and Political Teacher from School A, Ideological and Political Teacher from School B
Organize revolutionary old area practice + chorus; scientific research institute practice + song reflection	Practice-linked communication	Ideological and Political Teacher from School A, Ideological and Political Teacher from School B
Students resist "ideological and political education + songs"; consider it disguised preaching	Student resistance sentiment	Ideological and Political Teacher from School A, Ideological and Political Teacher from School B
Science and engineering students have weak music foundations; high technical operation thresholds	Participation threshold barriers	Music Teacher from School B, Ideological and Political Teacher from School B
Excessive pursuit of artistic individuality deviates from Main Melody themes	Difficulty balancing artistic innovation and themes	Music Teacher from School C, Ideological and Political Teacher from School C

- Campus Activity Organizer Interview Coding (3 Interviewees)

Table 27

Table 27 Campus Activity Organizer Interview Coding Zhongying (2025)		
Initial Concept	Category	Source
Host "Youth to the Motherland" Chorus Festival, "Melody of Technology" Festival	Brand activity development	Organizer from School A, Organizer from School B
Adopt "classic + new adaptation" song combination; allow pop-style adaptations	Song selection strategy	Organizer from School A, Organizer from School C
Online: campus official WeChat articles + Douyin short videos; Offline: lyric posters + jukeboxes	Online-offline promotion matrix	Organizer from School A, Organizer from School B

Exchange equipment with cultural enterprises; apply for special funds	Resource integration support	Organizer from School A, Organizer from School C
Appoint "college liaisons"; cross-major ice-breaking activities	Cross-subject coordination mechanism	Organizer from School A, Organizer from School C
"Technical review + ideological and political review" double review teams; theme interpretation meetings	Mechanism for balancing ideology and form	Organizer from School B, Organizer from School C
Build campus Main Melody music IP; AR red song map	Innovative communication carriers	Organizer from School A, Organizer from School B

3) Axial Coding: Category Aggregation and Relationship Sorting

- Framework of Relationships Between Core Categories and Subcategories

With "Main Melody Song communication optimization" as the core category, the subordinate and causal relationships between subcategories were sorted out around the three main categories of "communication problems – influencing factors – solutions", as follows:

Table 28

Main Category	Subcategory	Related Category	Logical Relationship
Communication Problems	1. Limited communication scenarios 2. Lack of connotation communication 3. Content-major disconnection 4. Artistic expression-popular aesthetic disconnection 5. Weak social attribute	Influencing factors: Lack of communication carriers, Formalized communication process, Creation-audience disconnection	Due to communication carriers only covering collective activities (no daily scenarios), communication focusing on form over connotation, and creation not aligning with students' majors and aesthetics, communication effects are fragmented and superficial.
Influencing Factors	1. Lack of communication carriers (daily scenarios, off-campus platforms) 2. Single communication method (only official promotion, collective activities) 3. Insufficient audience segmentation (no stratification by major/aesthetic preference) 4. Creation-audience disconnection (lack of understanding of students' preferences) 5. Participation threshold barriers (technical/music foundation gaps)	Solutions: Scenario penetration, Platform linkage, Curriculum integration, Creation optimization	Targeting influencing factors, communication problems are addressed through "scenario penetration to supplement carriers, platform linkage to expand channels, curriculum integration to strengthen relevance, and creation optimization to align with preferences".
Solutions	1. Scenario penetration (daily scenarios + professional scenarios) 2. Platform linkage (campus platforms + off-campus platforms + industry platforms) 3. Curriculum integration (professional courses + ideological and political courses + art courses) 4. Creation optimization (student participation + style adaptation + theme balance) 5. Resource support (funding + technology + cross-subject coordination)	Communication problems: Limited scenarios, Content disconnection, Aesthetic disconnection	Core communication problems (scenario limitations, content disconnection, aesthetic disconnection) are systematically solved through multi-dimensional solutions.

- Detailed Description of Subcategories

Subcategory 1: Communication Problems

Table 29

Subcategory	Specific Performance	Interview Source Examples
Limited communication scenarios	Only cover collective activities (opening ceremonies, sports meets); no communication in daily scenarios (canteens, libraries, dormitories); off-campus communication relies only on campus official websites (no external platforms)	S4: "Mainstream Melody Songs are played at collective activities like sports meets and graduation ceremonies, but rarely in canteens or libraries"; S6: "Excellent works are only performed on campus, with no recognition off-campus".

Lack of connotation communication	Students only remember melodies, not the historical background, era stories, or spiritual connotations behind songs; communication stays at the "playback" level without in-depth interpretation	S1: "Most students only remember melodies and know nothing about the historical background behind the lyrics"; S5: "Almost no one can explain the era background of song creation".
Content-major disconnection	Mainstream Melody Songs mostly focus on historical and cultural themes, with no connection to professional scenarios of science and engineering (e.g., mechanical design, programming) or arts (e.g., creative practice)	S2: "There is no link to daily learning scenarios of science and engineering, such as mechanical design"; S8: "Telling historical stories to science and engineering students is far less attractive than talking about technology-related topics".
Artistic expression-popular aesthetic disconnection	Some new songs have traditional melodies and outdated arrangements, conflicting with college students' preference for pop, rap, and electronic styles; classic old songs are over-repeated, while new songs have low communication	S3: "Some new songs have too traditional melodies and outdated arrangements, like music from the last century"; S3: "Few students know new Mainstream Melody Songs such as <i>The Song of the New Era</i> and <i>The Voice of Young China</i> ".
Weak social attribute	Students hesitate to share on social platforms for fear of "embarrassment" or "mockery"; the "formality" of Mainstream Melody Songs conflicts with college students' casual, personalized social aesthetics	S10: "I want to share but fear embarrassment, worried about being labeled as rigid"; S10: "College students prefer sharing humorous content on social media, and the formality of Mainstream Melody Songs is inconsistent with this".

Subcategory 2: Influencing Factors

Table 3

Table 30 Subcategory: Influencing Factors Zhongying (2025)

Subcategory	Specific Performance	Interview Source Examples
Lack of communication carriers	Daily carriers: No communication design for campus scenarios like canteens and libraries; Off-campus carriers: No collaboration with external platforms (Douyin, Bilibili, NetEase Cloud Music)	S4: "There are no dedicated communication channels designed for daily scenarios"; S6: "No cooperation with off-campus video platforms or music creators, leading to excellent works being unknown to the public".
Single communication method	Rely only on official account promotion, class group forwarding, and collective activity playback; lack of interactive and experiential communication forms (e.g., curriculum appreciation, technical interaction)	S1: "Main Melody communication on campus mainly relies on official account promotion and class group forwarding"; Ideological and Political Teacher from School B: "Students resist mere song playback; integration with professional practice is needed".
Insufficient audience segmentation	Communicators do not design content by stratifying "majors (humanities/science and engineering/arts)" or "aesthetic preferences (pop/traditional/electronic)", resulting in low content pertinence	S2: "Communicators fail to explore links between Main Melody and science and engineering fields like 'national heavyweight equipment R&D'"; S8: "All students are treated as a uniform audience, leading to one-size-fits-all content design".
Creation-audience disconnection	Main Melody creation teams are mostly senior industry professionals who lack understanding of college students' preferred music styles and aesthetic trends, creating a gap between works and students	S3: "Creation teams are mostly senior industry professionals who do not understand the music styles college students often listen to"; Music Teacher from School C: "Some creations ignore college students' needs for individuality and lightness".
Participation threshold barriers	Science and engineering students are reluctant to participate in communication activities due to weak music foundations and high technical operation thresholds (e.g., AI arrangement, VR equipment); non-music majors avoid chorus due to "fear of singing poorly"	Music Teacher from School B: "Some students give up participation because they are unfamiliar with AI arrangement or VR operation"; Organizer from School A: "Non-music majors are unwilling to join choruses for fear of singing poorly".

Subcategory 3: Solutions

Table 31

Table 31 Subcategory: Solutions Zhongying (2025)

Subcategory	Specific Performance	Interview Source Examples
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Scenario penetration	Daily scenarios: Play soft versions of songs (e.g., piano cover of <i>Me and My Motherland</i>) in canteens; set up "music broadcast corners" in libraries; Professional scenarios: Play songs before experiments + explain professional cases; integrate Main Melody themes into art creation courses	S4: "Play soft versions of Mainstream Melody Songs in canteens and set up 'music broadcast corners' in library corridors"; S2: "Play <i>Bless the Motherland</i> before experiments and explain cases linking the song's 'aerospace engineering' content to majors".
Platform linkage	Campus platforms: Set up "song story" columns on official WeChat accounts; open "discussion zones" on campus apps; Off-campus platforms: Launch "college Main Melody creation" topics on Douyin/Bilibili; set up "appreciation modules" on NetEase Cloud Music; Industry platforms: Collaborate with local opera houses and tech enterprises for promotion	S5: "Launch a 'Main Melody Song Stories' column on the campus official WeChat account"; S6: "Cooperate with Douyin and Bilibili to invite platform creators to comment on and repost excellent works"; Organizer from School C: "Collaborate with local opera houses to exhibit student works in professional venues".
Curriculum integration	Professional courses: Embed songs + professional cases in science and engineering experiments; guide students in adaptation/original creation in art courses; Ideological and political courses: "Theory + Story + Song" three-dimensional teaching; revolutionary old area practice + chorus; Music courses: Analyze Main Melody song structures and organize adaptation practice	S1: "Add 'Main Melody Song Appreciation' modules to Music Appreciation and ideological and political electives"; Ideological and Political Teacher from School A: "Play <i>On the Road to a Well-off Life</i> when teaching 'poverty alleviation' and combine it with MV footage of rural changes"; Music Teacher from School A: "Analyze the melody structure and folk instrument arrangement of <i>China in the Lights</i> in Music Appreciation courses".
Creation optimization	Student participation: Invite music majors to write pop lyrics and adapt old songs into rap/electronic versions; dance majors design choreography; Style adaptation: Integrate pop, electronic, and rap elements into creation; create "lyric posters" and "15-second cover challenges"; Theme balance: Clarify "creation boundaries" (retain core melodies/themes); use "double review teams" (technical + ideological and political) to ensure ideological consistency	S3: "Let students write lyrics that fit popular aesthetics and adapt old songs into rap or electronic versions"; S10: "Create 'lyric posters' and launch '15-second cover challenges'"; Organizer from School B: "Set up 'double review teams' with 50% weight for technical scores and 50% for ideological scores".
Resource support	Funding support: Apply for campus culture special funds and provincial art funds; exchange resources with enterprises/cultural and tourism departments; Technical support: Provide "zero-based operation manuals" and technical training (e.g., AI arrangement, VR operation); Cross-subject coordination: Appoint "college liaisons" and cross-major ice-breaking activities; set up "technical support teams"	Organizer from School A: "Apply for 'campus culture special funds' from the university, with an annual approval of 120,000 yuan"; Music Teacher from School B: "Create 'zero-based operation manuals' and offer 'technical entry workshops'"; Organizer from School C: "Appoint 'project leaders' to coordinate progress across music, dance, and fine arts majors".

4) High-Frequency Word Statistics for Solutions

Based on NVivo15's word frequency analysis of coding texts related to "solutions" (excluding basic terms like "Main Melody" and "songs"), high-frequency words with an occurrence frequency ≥ 5 were extracted, as follows:

Table 32

High-Frequency Word	Occurrence Frequency	Involved Interviewees	Core Related Solutions
Curriculum integration	8	S1, Music Teacher from School A, Ideological and Political Teacher from School A, Ideological and Political Teacher from School B	Embed Main Melody content into professional courses, ideological and political courses, and music courses
Student participation	7	S3, S6, Music Teacher from School C, Organizer from School C	Students participate in creation, adaptation, and sharing to enhance initiative
Scenario penetration	6	S4, S2, Organizer from School B, Organizer from School A	Communicate in daily scenarios (canteens, libraries) and professional scenarios (experimental courses, creation courses)
Platform linkage	6	S6, S10, Ideological and Political Teacher from School B, Organizer from School C	Collaborate with campus, off-campus, and industry platforms to expand communication scope
Technology empowerment	5	Music Teacher from School B, Ideological and Political Teacher from School B, Organizer from School B	VR scene restoration, AI arrangement, AR red song maps to lower participation thresholds

Major integration	5	S2, S8, Music Teacher from School B, Ideological and Political Teacher from School B	Link Main Melody content to science and engineering (technology) and arts (creation) majors
Resource integration	5	Organizer from School A, Organizer from School B, Organizer from School C	Coordinate funding, equipment, and cross-subjects to support activity implementation
Connotation interpretation	5	S1, S5, Ideological and Political Teacher from School A, Music Teacher from School C	Convey song history and spiritual connotations through columns, courses, and theme interpretation meetings

High-Frequency Word Analysis Conclusion: "Curriculum integration", "student participation", and "scenario penetration" are core solutions. This reflects that Main Melody Song communication in colleges should be centered on "education scenarios as the foundation, students as the main body, and full scenario coverage", supplemented by technical and resource support to achieve a shift from "passive communication" to "active participation".

5) Coding Reliability Test

To ensure coding validity, a "dual-coder" method was adopted. Two researchers independently coded 5 randomly selected interview texts (2 student interviews, 2 teacher interviews, 1 organizer interview), and the coding consistency coefficient (Kappa) was calculated using NVivo15. The results showed a Kappa coefficient of 0.87, which is greater than 0.8, indicating that the coding results have high reliability and conform to research norms.

4.4. PRACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The quadripartite guidelines operationalize a transformation matrix: (1) Content—youth-empathic works via university-pro funds (e.g., engineering "Chips in China," arts "Brushstroke Motherland"), piloted rap versions spiking shares 37%; (2) Channels—Douyin UP-master briefs, Bilibili analytics, campus AR song-maps, AR fidelity boosting dwell-time 2.1x; (3) Practice—"Main Melody Appreciation" MOOCs with ambassador cohorts (monthly shorts, semestral events), curtailing passivity 49%; (4) Ecosystems—policy funds, platform data swaps (e.g., NetEase student tags), family playlists for Parents' Days.

These enact Ministry of Education's (2020) aesthetics blueprint, mirroring Long (2025) 55% literacy via clubs and Zhao et al. (2025) Douyin tweaks (fan loops +31% retention). Campuses birth "active communicators," platforms harvest data-driven pushes, society cements consensus amid diversification.

5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Primarily, the Guangzhou undergraduate sample (n=599; 52% STEM, 28% humanities) constrains external validity to national/rural cohorts or post-2005 digital natives. Cross-sectional design precludes longitudinal causality (e.g., resonance persistence); self-reports invite social desirability (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.87$ mitigates but not eradicates). Qualitative n=9 privileges saturation over scale; absent physiological metrics (e.g., EEG for resonance) limits depth.

6. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Empirically, pursue RCTs on VR immersions (e.g., "Yellow River" reenactments) versus controls, segmental diffs (gender: females +22% lyric resonance; seniors -15% amid anxiety), and national panels post-AI composition surges. Theoretically, integrate neuroaesthetics for subconscious pathways; comparatively assay K-pop ideological analogs in Asia.

7. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the communication of Mainstream Melody Songs among youth in China is intricately tied to digital platforms, emotional resonance, and cultural identity. These songs continue to play a pivotal role in promoting national pride and collective unity, although their impact is increasingly challenged by the global dominance of pop culture and the algorithmic culture of social media platforms. The findings suggest that while these songs have significant ideological value, their ability to connect with today's youth hinges on their capacity to evolve and engage with modern

digital aesthetics and youth preferences. This evolution could be achieved through the integration of contemporary musical styles and the strategic use of digital platforms that resonate with youth culture.

Additionally, media literacy emerges as a crucial factor influencing the depth of engagement with these songs. Youth with higher levels of media literacy demonstrated a more critical understanding of the ideological messages embedded in these songs, while those with lower media literacy were more likely to engage passively. This finding aligns with the idea that media literacy is essential for fostering critical thinking and deeper cultural engagement. By enhancing youth's media literacy, these songs can maintain their cultural significance while adapting to the digital age.

In summary, the Mainstream Melody Songs of China are at a crossroads between tradition and modernity. To ensure their continued relevance, they must be reframed and adapted to digital platforms, incorporating contemporary musical elements while preserving their cultural and ideological core. Furthermore, promoting media literacy among youth will help deepen their engagement with culturally significant content and ensure that these songs remain a meaningful part of their cultural identity. Ultimately, the study highlights the complex dynamics of music communication in the digital age, offering insights for educators, content creators, and policymakers on how to navigate this evolving landscape.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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