



**Innovating Vocal Music Education in Jilin Province, China:
A Phenomenological Study**

Zijian Zhao¹, Teresita K. Capacete²

*College of Arts, Sciences, and Education, Trinity University of Asia, Cathedral Heights,
Quezon City, 1109, Philippines^{1,2}*

 zijianzhao@tua.edu.ph

RESEARCH ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT
Received: February 9, 2026 Reviewed: May 14, 2026 Accepted: June 21, 2026 Published: June 30, 2026  Copyright © 2025 by the Author(s). This open- access article is distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.	Vocal music education in China is increasingly expected to preserve cultural heritage while responding to technological advancement, educational inclusivity, and globalization. Despite national policies encouraging the integration of traditional culture into arts education, limited research has examined how vocal music educators implement these expectations in their daily teaching practices. This study explored the lived experiences of vocal music teachers in Jilin Province, China, focusing on innovative pedagogical practices, challenges encountered, and future directions for vocal music education. Guided by descriptive phenomenology and informed by multicultural music education perspectives, the study employed purposive sampling to engage 12 experienced vocal music educators from three leading universities in Jilin Province as research participants. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted in Chinese and analyzed using thematic phenomenological analysis. Trustworthiness was established through member checking, reflexive journaling, peer review, and participant validation of themes. Four major themes emerged: integration of ethnic musical heritage with contemporary vocal pedagogy; utilization of educational technology to enhance teaching precision and accessibility; adoption of personalized and inclusive teaching philosophies; and cultivation of collaborative and cross-cultural professional networks. Participants described balancing traditional Korean, Mongolian,

and regional Chinese vocal practices with contemporary training methods while incorporating digital technologies, individualized instruction, and collaborative resource-sharing initiatives. The findings suggest that vocal music educators actively serve as cultural mediators, pedagogical innovators, and agents of educational transformation. The study contributes to understanding how localized educational practices support cultural preservation, technological adaptation, and inclusive arts education within contemporary Chinese higher education.

Keywords: *vocal music education, lived experiences, pedagogical innovation, cultural integration, educational technology*

Introduction

The preservation and advancement of cultural heritage through arts education has become a major priority within contemporary Chinese educational reform. Recent educational policies emphasize the dual responsibility of safeguarding traditional artistic practices while promoting innovation and international competitiveness in arts education. Vocal music education occupies a particularly important position within this agenda because it functions not only as a medium of artistic expression but also as a mechanism for preserving cultural memory, transmitting local traditions, and developing professional artistic talent (Georgiou & Papademetriou, 2022; Voloshyn, 2021; Wu, 2019; Chen, 2019).

According to national educational directives, schools and universities are encouraged to integrate local cultural traditions into curriculum development while simultaneously preparing students for participation in increasingly globalized artistic environments. Such expectations place vocal music educators at the center of complex educational transformations; teachers are expected to preserve traditional musical heritage, adopt emerging technologies, accommodate increasingly diverse student populations, and maintain high professional performance standards (Long & Yulia, 2025; Pechenyuk et al., 2023; Culp & Salvador, 2021; Feng, 2025).

The challenges associated with these expectations are particularly visible in Jilin Province, a region characterized by rich cultural diversity and the coexistence of Han Chinese, Korean, Manchu, and Mongolian musical traditions. The province provides a unique educational context where traditional forms such as Korean folk singing, Mongolian long-song traditions, and regional folk music continue to influence contemporary vocal music education. Therefore, educators face the ongoing challenge of balancing cultural preservation with modern pedagogical demands.

Existing scholarship has examined music curriculum reform, cultural preservation in music education, technology-enhanced music learning, and student outcomes in arts education (Culp & Salvador, 2021; Feng, 2025). Studies have highlighted the importance of multicultural music education, culturally responsive teaching, and the integration of digital technologies into music instruction (Pechenyuk et al., 2023). However, much of the existing literature focuses on policy analysis, curriculum design, or student performance outcomes. Comparatively little attention has

been given to the lived experiences of vocal music educators who are directly responsible for implementing these reforms.

This gap is particularly significant because teachers serve as key mediators between educational policy and classroom practice. Understanding their experiences provides insight into the micropolitics of educational innovation—that is, how educators interpret, negotiate, adapt, and implement institutional expectations within specific cultural and local contexts. Exploring teachers' perspectives can reveal practical innovations that are often overlooked in policy-focused research.

The present study is informed by two complementary perspectives. First, phenomenology provides a framework for understanding how individuals construct meaning from lived experiences. Rather than examining educational innovation solely as a policy outcome, phenomenology emphasizes how educators experience, interpret, and respond to changing educational realities. Second, multicultural music education theory recognizes the importance of preserving diverse musical traditions while promoting cultural understanding and artistic inclusivity within educational settings.

Although previous studies have examined music education reform, cultural preservation, and technology integration (Yang, 2024; Sun, 2026), there remains limited empirical research exploring how vocal music educators experience and enact pedagogical innovation within culturally diverse regions of China. Existing research rarely examines how teachers simultaneously negotiate traditional heritage, technological change, inclusion, and professional collaboration in their daily practice. Consequently, the voices of educators themselves remain underrepresented in current scholarship.

Hence, this study sought to explore the lived experiences of vocal music educators in Jilin Province, China. Specifically, it aimed to describe the innovative pedagogical practices employed by vocal music educators, examine how educators integrate traditional ethnic musical heritage with contemporary vocal instruction, identify challenges encountered in vocal music teaching and the strategies used to address them, explore the role of technology and inclusive practices in vocal music education, and understand educators' perspectives regarding the future development of vocal music education. The findings of this study would contribute to scholarship on music education, cultural preservation, and pedagogical innovation by providing a localized understanding of educational transformation within contemporary China.

Methods

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive phenomenological research design. Phenomenology seeks to understand the essence of a phenomenon by exploring how individuals experience and interpret it in their everyday lives. The approach was selected because the study aimed to investigate the lived experiences of vocal music educators and the meanings they attach to their innovative teaching practices.

Descriptive phenomenology emphasizes careful description of participants' experiences while minimizing researcher assumptions through reflexive processes. This approach enabled an in-depth exploration of how educators understand and navigate contemporary challenges in vocal music education.

Participants of the Study

Purposive sampling was utilized to engage 12 vocal music educators from three leading universities in Jilin Province, China, as research participants. The selection

criteria included current employment as a vocal music educator, a minimum of ten years of teaching experience, involvement in curriculum innovation or vocal pedagogy development, and willingness to participate in in-depth interviews.

Moreover, the participants' ages ranged from 42 to 58 years, and they had between 14 and 36 years of teaching experience. The sample included both male and female educators representing diverse vocal specializations and institutional contexts. The sample size was considered appropriate for phenomenological inquiry because it allowed for in-depth exploration while achieving thematic saturation.

Data Collection

The data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted via Zoom. An interview protocol was developed based on literature related to music education, multicultural pedagogy, and educational innovation. Prior to implementation, the interview guide was reviewed by two experts in music education and one qualitative research specialist to ensure content validity and clarity. The interview questions were focused on the participants' teaching philosophies, experiences integrating cultural traditions, use of technology, challenges encountered, inclusive teaching practices, collaborative activities, and visions for the future of vocal music education.

Accordingly, interviews were conducted in Mandarin Chinese and lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. With participants' consent, all interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Because interviews were conducted in Chinese, a rigorous translation process was implemented. Original transcripts were first transcribed verbatim in Chinese. Selected excerpts used for reporting findings were translated into English and subsequently reviewed through back-translation procedures by bilingual academics to ensure semantic accuracy and preservation of meaning.

Analysis of Data

Data analysis followed a phenomenological thematic process adapted from established phenomenological procedures. First, interview recordings were transcribed verbatim and repeatedly reviewed to achieve immersion in the data. Second, significant statements relevant to participants' experiences of vocal music education were identified and extracted. Third, meaning units were generated through careful interpretation of these statements. Fourth, related meanings were clustered into thematic categories. Finally, the themes were synthesized to identify the essential structure of participants' experiences. Throughout the analysis, reflexive memo writing was used to document emerging interpretations and minimize researcher bias.

Several strategies were also employed to ensure trustworthiness. Credibility was established through prolonged engagement with the data and member checking, whereby participants reviewed thematic summaries and confirmed the accuracy of interpretations. Dependability, on the other hand, was supported through the maintenance of an audit trail documenting coding decisions and analytical procedures. Confirmability was strengthened through peer debriefing with qualitative research experts. Lastly, reflexivity was maintained through reflective journaling and bracketing practices. Researchers continuously examined their assumptions regarding music education and cultural preservation to minimize undue influence on data interpretation.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the appropriate institutional review authority prior to data collection. The participants received detailed information regarding the

study's purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits before providing informed consent. Confidentiality was also maintained through the use of pseudonyms and the removal of identifying information from transcripts and reports. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. All data were securely stored and used solely for academic purposes.

Results and Findings

An analysis of the interview data generated four (4) interconnected themes that describe how vocal music educators in Jilin Province experience and enact pedagogical innovation. These themes reflect the essence of their lived experiences as they negotiate cultural preservation, technological transformation, educational inclusion, and professional collaboration in contemporary vocal music education.

Theme 1: Integrating Ethnic Musical Heritage with Contemporary Vocal Pedagogy

This theme refers to the educators' experiences of preserving local ethnic musical traditions while simultaneously incorporating contemporary vocal techniques and pedagogical approaches. Participants described this integration not as a replacement of traditional practices but as a creative process through which cultural heritage is revitalized and made relevant to contemporary learners.

Across all interviews, participants emphasized that vocal music education in Jilin Province is deeply influenced by the region's multicultural environment, particularly the musical traditions of Korean, Mongolian, Manchu, and Northeastern Chinese communities. Participants perceived themselves as cultural custodians responsible for preserving these traditions while preparing students for modern artistic and professional demands. Rather than teaching traditional and Western vocal systems separately, educators described intentionally combining local singing techniques with contemporary vocal training methods. Participants viewed this integration as essential for developing technically competent performers who remain connected to their cultural roots, as evident in the following interview extract:

When I teach Korean folk songs such as Arirang, I do not separate folk singing from professional vocal training. I teach students how traditional vowel shaping can work together with modern breathing techniques. In this way, students understand both the culture and the technique. (Participant 1)

Similarly, another educator described blending Mongolian long-song traditions with contemporary performance practices:

Young people are attracted to contemporary music styles. If we only teach traditional songs in their original form, many students struggle to connect with them. By combining long-song techniques with modern vocal expression, students become more interested while still learning the cultural meaning behind the music. (Participant 9)

Moreover, other participants highlighted the role of regional identity in vocal expression, as stated in the following interview response of Participant 7, *"The rhythm and emotional quality of our Northeastern dialect contain musical characteristics that students can naturally understand. I incorporate these speech patterns into the vocal exercises because they help students in developing authentic emotional expression."*

Furthermore, the participants consistently linked their pedagogical decisions to the unique cultural environment of Jilin Province. Located in Northeast China, Jilin is home to diverse ethnic communities whose musical traditions continue to influence

local cultural life. Educators accentuated their responsibility to ensure that these traditions remain visible within higher music education.

Nevertheless, several participants expressed concern that globalization and standardized music curricula may gradually marginalize local traditions. Consequently, integrating ethnic musical practices into contemporary vocal instruction was perceived as both a pedagogical strategy and a form of cultural preservation. The findings support previous research emphasizing the importance of integrating traditional music culture into contemporary music education (Chen, 2019). Similar studies have argued that culturally responsive music education strengthens students' cultural identity while promoting artistic development. Furthermore, Chen (2025) observed that incorporating elements of intangible cultural heritage into contemporary artistic practice enables traditions to remain relevant within modern cultural contexts.

The present findings extend this literature by demonstrating how educators actively negotiate the relationship between preservation and innovation within everyday teaching practice. Rather than treating traditional music as a static historical artifact, participants viewed cultural heritage as a dynamic educational resource capable of evolving alongside contemporary artistic trends.

From a phenomenological perspective, participants experienced themselves as mediators between tradition and modernity. The essence of this experience lies in their perception that preserving cultural heritage does not require resisting change; rather, preservation is achieved through adaptation and reinterpretation. Also, educators described a lived tension between safeguarding authenticity and responding to contemporary educational demands. Their narratives suggest that innovation emerges not from abandoning tradition but from reimagining tradition within new pedagogical contexts. Through this process, teachers construct meanings that simultaneously honor cultural continuity and support artistic development.

By and large, this theme reveals that the integration of ethnic heritage and contemporary pedagogy is not merely a teaching technique but a deeply meaningful professional responsibility through which educators contribute to cultural sustainability, student identity formation, and artistic innovation.

Theme 2: Utilizing Technology to Enhance Teaching Precision and Accessibility

This theme describes educators' experiences of integrating digital technologies into vocal music instruction to improve teaching accuracy, provide individualized feedback, expand learning opportunities, and increase educational accessibility. Participants viewed technology not as a replacement for traditional vocal instruction but as a complementary tool that enhances pedagogical effectiveness and broadens access to quality music education.

Participants consistently described technology as an important catalyst for innovation in contemporary vocal music education. While traditional vocal training has historically relied on demonstration, imitation, and subjective evaluation, participants reported increasingly adopting data-assisted and technology-supported approaches to provide more objective, efficient, and inclusive instruction. Essentially, educators emphasized that technological tools allow students to visualize, monitor, and evaluate aspects of vocal performance that were previously difficult to observe directly. Participants believed that technology strengthened both teaching precision and student self-awareness, enabling learners to engage more actively in their own development, as explained in the following interview extract:

In the past, students relied mainly on what they could hear from me. Now, they can actually see what is happening with their voice production. When students can visualize their vocal cord movement, they can understand technical corrections much faster. (Participant 5)

Aside from this, the participants also described how artificial intelligence supports individualized learning. In fact, Participant 2 elucidated, *“Every student has different strengths and weaknesses. The AI diagnostic system helps us analyze vocal characteristics and design exercises that are specific to each student. It saves time and makes instruction more targeted.”* Moreover, other participants also discussed the increasing use of virtual reality technologies to simulate authentic performance experiences. Such innovations were viewed as particularly valuable for students who had limited opportunities to perform in professional venues. Thus, Participant 3 underscored, *“Many students feel nervous when they first perform on stage. Through virtual reality simulations, they can experience different performance environments before the actual event. This builds confidence and reduces anxiety.”*

In addition, technology was also perceived as a means of overcoming geographical and physical barriers. Participants highlighted how online platforms, virtual masterclasses, and assistive technologies allowed a wider range of learners to access vocal music education. In fact, Participant 10 claimed, *“Some students live far from major cultural centers, while others have physical limitations. Technology allows us to reach these learners and provide opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable.”* The significance of technology was particularly evident within the context of Jilin Province. Participants noted that the province contains both urban centers with advanced educational resources and rural communities with more limited access to specialized music training. Technology was therefore viewed as a practical solution for reducing disparities in educational opportunities.

Several educators reported that online instruction became especially important for maintaining continuity of learning across geographically dispersed regions. Participants also emphasized that technological tools facilitated collaboration among institutions throughout Northeast China, allowing students and teachers to participate in shared workshops, performances, and professional development activities. Furthermore, participants accentuated the importance of technology in supporting students with diverse learning needs. Assistive technologies, including speech correction software and tactile feedback devices, were perceived as valuable resources for creating more equitable and accessible learning environments.

The findings align with previous research indicating that educational technology can significantly enhance music learning by increasing learner engagement, improving feedback mechanisms, and supporting individualized instruction (Dong, 2025). Similarly, Yang (2024) reported that technology-assisted vocal training can improve pronunciation, technical development, and learning efficiency among music students.

The present study extends these findings by demonstrating how vocal music educators actively integrate artificial intelligence, visualization systems, virtual reality platforms, and assistive technologies into their daily teaching practices. Rather than viewing technology solely as a supplementary resource, participants described it as an essential component of contemporary vocal pedagogy.

Moreover, the findings support broader scholarship on digital transformation in arts education, which emphasizes the growing role of data-informed instructional approaches and technology-mediated learning environments in enhancing educational quality and accessibility (Sun, 2026).

From a phenomenological perspective, participants experienced technology as a means of expanding pedagogical possibilities rather than replacing human interaction. The essence of this experience lies in educators' perception that technology enables them to better understand, communicate, and support students' vocal development. Participants described a shift from exclusively intuitive forms of instruction toward a balance between artistic expertise and scientific evidence. Likewise, technology provided new ways of perceiving vocal phenomena, allowing both teachers and students to access dimensions of performance that were previously invisible or difficult to explain.

At a deeper level, educators experienced technology as a tool for democratizing learning opportunities. Their narratives revealed a strong belief that technological innovation could reduce educational inequalities by providing high-quality instruction, personalized feedback, and performance opportunities to students regardless of geographical location, socioeconomic status, or physical ability.

This theme suggests that the integration of technology in vocal music education is not merely a technical advancement but a transformative pedagogical experience that reshapes how teachers understand instruction, accessibility, and student development in the twenty-first century.

Theme 3: Adoption of Personalized and Inclusive Teaching Philosophy

The findings reveal a significant shift among vocal music educators from traditional teacher-centered instruction toward personalized and inclusive pedagogical approaches. Rather than applying uniform teaching methods to all learners, participants emphasized adapting instruction to students' diverse cognitive, physical, and sociocultural characteristics. This transformation reflects contemporary educational principles that recognize learner diversity as a resource rather than a limitation and align with the growing emphasis on differentiated instruction and inclusive education in music pedagogy (Dong, 2025; Wen, 2025).

Additionally, participants described various strategies designed to accommodate individual learning needs while maintaining artistic rigor. For example, Collaborating Researcher 1 implemented a "Color-Pitch Coordination Training Method" to assist students experiencing difficulties with pitch perception. By linking visual color cues with tonal patterns, the approach provides alternative pathways for musical understanding, demonstrating how multisensory instruction can enhance learning outcomes for students with diverse cognitive profiles. This practice illustrates the broader pedagogical principle of adapting instructional methods to students' learning preferences rather than expecting learners to conform to a single instructional model.

The commitment to inclusivity was also evident in practices developed for students with physical or health-related challenges. Collaborating Researcher 4 introduced a "Silent Practice Method" for a student recovering from vocal nodules, combining physical movement and internal auditory imagery to sustain vocal development while protecting vocal health. Such innovations demonstrate how teachers balance artistic progression with student well-being, highlighting the importance of flexibility and responsiveness in vocal music instruction.

Beyond individual accommodations, the participants emphasized expanding educational access for marginalized populations. Research Collaborator 10's establishment of a "Tent Music Classroom" in the remote Aila region utilized bone-conduction technology to support students with hearing impairments. This initiative illustrates how inclusive pedagogy extends beyond classroom adaptation to encompass the issues of educational equity and social participation. Through leveraging

technological and contextual resources, teachers create opportunities for learners who might otherwise be excluded from formal vocal music education.

A notable finding is that inclusive teaching practices were perceived not only as beneficial for students with specific needs but also as enriching the learning environment for all students. Participants reported that classrooms designed around diversity encouraged empathy, collaboration, and mutual respect among learners. Such environments foster a stronger sense of belonging and engagement, which in turn supports artistic confidence and creative expression. This finding supports previous research suggesting that inclusive educational settings contribute to both academic achievement and socio-emotional development (Yao & Li, 2025).

Overall, the adoption of personalized and inclusive teaching philosophies demonstrates a broader reconceptualization of vocal music education. Teachers are increasingly positioning themselves as facilitators who recognize and respond to learner diversity while maintaining high artistic expectations. The findings suggest that effective vocal music education is not achieved through standardization but through pedagogical flexibility that enables all students to participate meaningfully and develop their musical potential.

Theme 4: Cultivation of Cooperation and Cross-Cultural Networks

The findings indicate that the cultivation of cooperation and cross-cultural networks has emerged as a significant strategy for addressing resource limitations and professional isolation in vocal music education. Participants emphasized that effective vocal music teaching extends beyond individual classrooms and institutions, requiring collaborative frameworks that facilitate resource sharing, professional exchange, and cultural interaction. These networks function as platforms for collective learning and innovation, enabling educators and students to engage with broader artistic communities while expanding access to educational opportunities (Yang, 2025).

A prominent pattern observed in the data was the establishment of cross-institutional alliances designed to strengthen collaboration among educators and students. Examples include the “Tumen River Vocal Music Alliance,” the “Jilin Province Universities Vocal Music Alliance,” and the “Pan Prairie Vocal Music Alliance.” Although differing in scope and membership, these initiatives share a common objective: creating sustainable mechanisms for exchanging expertise, instructional resources, and performance opportunities. Through collaborative activities such as concerts, workshops, competitions, and academic forums, participants reported enhanced professional interaction and increased exposure to diverse pedagogical approaches.

Research Collaborator 11 posited that, beyond institutional cooperation, the findings emphasize the importance of cross-cultural engagement as a catalyst for artistic development. Participants described how cultural exchange programs, festivals, and collaborative performances exposed students to different musical traditions, artistic perspectives, and performance practices. Such experiences encouraged students to critically reflect on their own cultural identities while developing a broader understanding of global musical diversity. Rather than viewing local and international influences as competing forces, educators promoted an integrative perspective in which cultural exchange serves as a source of creativity and innovation. This finding aligns with previous studies emphasizing the role of intercultural learning in fostering artistic growth and cultural competence (Zhang, 2025).

The data further suggest that collaborative networks contribute significantly to teachers’ professional development. Participants viewed these alliances as communities

of practice where educators could share experiences, discuss pedagogical challenges, and collectively develop innovative teaching strategies. This collaborative model reduces professional isolation and supports continuous learning, particularly in regions where access to specialized resources may be limited. The findings indicate that professional growth is increasingly dependent not only on individual expertise but also on participation in supportive professional networks.

Another important finding concerns the role of these networks in mitigating educational resource disparities. Through the sharing of instructional materials, performance opportunities, and technological resources, participating institutions were able to expand educational access while reducing duplication of effort and costs. Research Collaborator 12 emphasized that this collaborative approach demonstrates how collective action can address structural challenges in arts education and create more equitable learning opportunities for students across different regions and institutional contexts.

Furthermore, the participants emphasized that cross-cultural and professional networks provide students with valuable opportunities to develop broader career perspectives. Interaction with artists, scholars, and educators from different cultural backgrounds exposes students to international artistic standards and professional pathways. Such experiences not only enhance artistic competence but also strengthen students' adaptability and readiness to participate in an increasingly globalized music industry.

Overall, the cultivation of cooperation and cross-cultural networks reflects a shift from isolated educational practices toward collaborative and interconnected models of vocal music education. The findings suggest that partnerships among institutions, educators, and cultural communities play a crucial role in promoting innovation, expanding educational access, and fostering intercultural understanding. These networks contribute not only to the professional development of teachers and the artistic growth of students but also to the broader goal of creating a more inclusive and globally engaged vocal music education system.

Discussion

This study explored the innovative teaching practices of vocal music educators in Jilin Province. It revealed four (4) interconnected themes: the integration of traditional ethnic heritage with modern pedagogical approaches, the utilization of technology to enhance teaching precision and accessibility, the adoption of personalized and inclusive teaching philosophies, and the cultivation of cooperation and cross-cultural networks. Together, these findings demonstrate how vocal music educators are actively responding to contemporary educational challenges while preserving the cultural and artistic foundations of their discipline.

A key finding of this study is the deliberate integration of traditional cultural heritage into modern vocal music instruction. The participants did not view tradition and innovation as opposing forces; rather, they employed pedagogical strategies that enabled traditional musical forms to coexist with contemporary teaching methods and performance practices. This finding supports previous research emphasizing the importance of integrating traditional music culture into higher education as a means of preserving cultural identity while fostering artistic innovation (Chen, 2019). The educators' practices also reflect China's broader educational emphasis on cultural confidence and the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. Through adapting traditional vocal techniques to contemporary learning contexts, teachers not only

safeguard cultural traditions but also make them meaningful and accessible to younger generations. These findings suggest that culturally responsive music education can serve as both a preservation strategy and a catalyst for creative development.

Another significant finding concerns the growing role of technology in vocal music education. Participants reported utilizing artificial intelligence, visualization systems, virtual reality environments, and assistive technologies to enhance instructional effectiveness and learner engagement. Consistent with emerging literature on digital transformation in music education (Yang, 2024; Sun, 2026), the findings indicate that technology is no longer merely a supplementary teaching aid but an integral component of pedagogical practice. The use of objective diagnostic tools provides students with immediate and individualized feedback, reducing reliance on subjective evaluation while supporting evidence-based learning. Furthermore, technological innovations expand educational accessibility by supporting remote instruction and accommodating learners with diverse needs. These findings demonstrate how digital technologies can contribute to both instructional precision and educational equity within artistic disciplines.

The study also highlights the increasing importance of personalized and inclusive teaching approaches. Participants emphasized adapting instructional methods to accommodate individual differences in learning styles, cognitive abilities, and physical conditions. This finding aligns with differentiated instruction frameworks that advocate tailoring educational experiences to diverse learner needs (Wen, 2025; Yao & Li, 2025). Importantly, the participants viewed inclusivity not as a separate educational objective but as a fundamental principle of effective teaching. Their experiences suggest that inclusive pedagogical practices benefit not only students with specific learning needs but also the broader learning community by fostering empathy, collaboration, and engagement. These findings reinforce the view that high artistic standards and inclusive education are not mutually exclusive but can be achieved simultaneously through thoughtful pedagogical design.

The development of collaborative and cross-cultural networks emerged as another important dimension of pedagogical innovation. Participants described establishing alliances that facilitated professional exchange, resource sharing, and intercultural engagement. This finding extends previous studies highlighting the value of collaborative learning communities in arts education (Bond et al., 2022). Such networks address challenges associated with limited educational resources and professional isolation while providing students with opportunities to engage in diverse artistic and cultural experiences. The findings suggest that collaboration serves not only practical purposes but also contributes to the development of intercultural competence, a skill increasingly important in contemporary globalized educational and artistic environments.

Taken together, these four themes reveal a broader transformation in vocal music education. Rather than relying solely on traditional master-apprentice models, educators are adopting multidimensional approaches that combine cultural preservation, technological innovation, learner-centered pedagogy, and collaborative engagement. These practices illustrate the evolving role of vocal music teachers as cultural mediators, educational innovators, and community builders. Their efforts demonstrate how music education can respond to contemporary social, technological, and cultural changes while maintaining its artistic integrity.

The findings also carry important implications for educational policy and practice. Educational institutions should provide greater support for teacher-led innovations, particularly those involving digital technologies, inclusive teaching

strategies, and cultural heritage preservation. Professional development programs should encourage interdisciplinary collaboration and equip educators with the skills necessary to implement emerging technologies effectively. Furthermore, policymakers should recognize the value of collaborative networks and create mechanisms that facilitate resource sharing and cross-institutional partnerships. Supporting these initiatives may contribute to a more equitable, sustainable, and culturally responsive model of vocal music education.

Generally, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on innovation in music education by demonstrating how vocal music teachers actively negotiate the relationship between tradition and modernity, local identity and global engagement, and artistic excellence and educational inclusion. The findings suggest that the future development of vocal music education depends not on choosing between these dimensions but on integrating them in ways that respond to the evolving needs of learners and society.

Conclusion and Future Works

The exploration of vocal music education within Jilin Province reveals a vibrant and adaptive educational environment. Vocal music educators in this region have pioneered a hybrid pedagogical model that adeptly combines cultural heritage preservation with cutting-edge technological advancements and inclusive teaching strategies. This model not only enhances the educational experience for students but also ensures the transmission of intangible cultural assets across generations. The initiatives led by these teachers underscore the importance of supporting grassroots innovations, promoting inter-regional knowledge exchange, and integrating educator insights into policy formulation. These steps are crucial for advancing vocal music education in China and serve as an exemplary case study for global art education contexts seeking to balance tradition with modernity. The educators' efforts demonstrate the transformative potential of innovative teaching methodologies in the field of vocal music education, offering a blueprint for honoring cultural roots while embracing future advancements.

Despite the valuable insights gained from this study, several avenues for future research emerge. Firstly, the study's focus on a specific geographical area in China restricts the generalizability of its findings. To address this, future studies could adopt a broader national or even cross-national perspective, enabling a comparative analysis that enhances the applicability of the results across diverse educational settings. Secondly, the current research primarily involves highly experienced professors; incorporating the viewpoints of early-career teachers and educators from varied institutional types would enrich the understanding of pedagogical innovations across the professional spectrum.

Furthermore, employing longitudinal research designs would be beneficial to track the long-term effects of these innovative teaching methods on student learning outcomes, providing a more comprehensive assessment of their efficacy. Additionally, exploring the perspectives of students and other stakeholders, such as administrators, parents, and community members, would offer a holistic view of the vocal music education ecosystem, identifying areas for improvement and further innovation.

Lastly, while the present study relies on qualitative data, future research could incorporate quantitative methods to statistically validate the effectiveness of the innovative teaching approaches discussed. This mixed-methods approach would strengthen the evidence base, supporting the widespread adoption of successful

strategies in vocal music education and contributing to the global discourse on integrating tradition with innovation in arts education.

References

- [1] Bond, V. L., Vasil, M., Derges, J. D., & Nichols, B. E. (2022). Mentoring graduate students in music education: A mixed-methods phenomenological study. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 70(4), 425–448.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/00224294221081000>
- [2] Chen, P. (2019). Analysis on the integration of traditional music culture in university and college vocal music education. *Review of Educational Methodological Innovation and Practice*, 2(3), 64–66. <https://doi.org/10.26549/jxffcfxyyj.v2i3.1892>
- [3] Chen, Y. F. (2025). Traditional music elements in contemporary music creation: The value and application of intangible cultural heritage music. *Art and Design Research*, 3(3), 185–188. <https://doi.org/10.69979/3041-0673.25.03.055>
- [4] Culp, M. E., & Salvador, K. (2021). Music teacher education program practices: Preparing teachers to work with diverse learners. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 30(2), 105708372098436.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1057083720984365>
- [5] Dong, J. C. (2025). Research on the influence of interactive design of online music teaching platforms on students' learning motivation. *Education Theory and Research*, (7). <https://doi.org/10.63887/etr.2025.1.7.84>
- [6] Feng, X. (2025). Transformation and development of music education in primary and secondary schools in the digital music era. *Management of Education*, 15(4-1), 358–367. <https://doi.org/10.25726/v1817-9673-2727-i>
- [7] Georgiou, S., & Papademetriou, C. (2022). Education and music: A two-way relationship intrinsically linked to a nation's identity. In *Research anthology on music education in the digital era* (pp. 1–11). IGI Global.
<https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-5356-8.ch001>
- [8] Long, P., & Yulia, A. (2025). Integrating traditional Chinese music into modern education: A comprehensive literature review. *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)*, 10(2), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v10i2.3260>
- [9] Pechenyuk, M., Martyniuk, L., Lutsenko, V., Shpak, H., Pukhalskyi, T., & Kuziv, M. (2023). Enhancing professional competence of future vocal teachers through analyzing current music culture: The neuroaesthetic outlook. *BRAIN. Broad Research in Artificial Intelligence and Neuroscience*, 14(3), 361–378.
<https://doi.org/10.18662/brain/14.3/479>
- [10] Sun, J. Y. (2026). Innovation in adolescent music education under the digital background: Exploring learning models integrating intelligent technology and interdisciplinary approaches. *Smart Education*, 3(1), 77–80.
<https://doi.org/10.69979/3029-2735.26.01.025>

- [11] Voloshyn, P. (2021). Development of vocal and performance skills of vocalists of artistic educational institutions. *Collection of Scientific Papers of Uman State Pedagogical University*, 1(4), 136–142. <https://doi.org/10.31499/2307-4906.4.2021.250206>
- [12] Wen, Y. (2025). Research on the application of differentiated teaching in middle - school music choirs. *Anmai Journal of Contemporary Education and Art*, 1(5), 273–275. <https://doi.org/10.64216/3080-1516.25.05.082>
- [13] Wu, J. (2019). Systematic discussion and rational thinking of vocal music education under the current social background of China. *Proceedings of the 2Nd International Seminar on Education Research and Social Science (ISERSS 2019)*, 895–898. <https://doi.org/10.2991/iserss-19.2019.169>
- [14] Yao, Z., & Li, Z. T. (2025). The modern transformation of “teaching students in accordance with their aptitude”: The practical path of traditional cultural concepts in personalized education. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(6), 107–113. <https://doi.org/10.70693/rwsk.v1i6.1118>
- [15] Yang, M. F. (2025). Studying in South Korea: Academic growth and life experience from a cross - cultural perspective. *International Students’ Voices*, 1(1), 31–32. <https://doi.org/10.63650/jisv.v1i1.10>
- [16] Yang, M. Y. (2024). Research on the improvement effect of singing language training on students’ pronunciation ability in higher vocational vocal music major. *Scientific and Technological Innovation and Development*, 1(4), 7–9. <https://doi.org/10.69979/3041-067>
- [17] Zhang, J. Y. (2025). Research on cultural mentality cultivation strategies in international Chinese language education from the perspective of cross-cultural communication: Taking cultural comparison and situational teaching as the path. *Smart Education*, 2(9), 210–212. <https://doi.org/10.69979/3029-2735.25.09.067>

Acknowledgment

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to Trinity University of Asia, Northeast Normal University, Jilin University, and Jilin Art Institute for their support in the implementation of this study.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Declaration Statement

When preparing manuscripts, authors used AI tools to perform basic grammar and spelling checks. Then they edited the content as needed.