



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

## A study on the Impact of the Development of Henan Zheng Music on the Inheritance and Cultural Identity of Chinese Traditional Music

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**ABSTRACT**

This research aims to comprehensively investigate the impact of the development of Henan Zheng music on the inheritance and cultural identity of Chinese traditional music. The study delves into the historical evolution, cultural significance, and contemporary relevance of Henan Zheng music, exploring its interplay with the transmission of musical knowledge and conducting a comparative analysis with other regional Zheng music styles. The purpose is to unravel the intricate relationships between these variables and contribute nuanced insights into how tradition and modernity intersect within Chinese traditional music. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating a thematic literature review to establish the theoretical foundations and inform the research questions. A thematic literature analysis is performed to identify key themes and concepts. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews with 14 experts in Henan Zheng music are conducted, utilizing an interview guideline to explore their perspectives on the variables under study. The purposive sampling technique is used to select participants. Thematic analysis is applied to the literature review and interview data, identifying recurring themes and concepts. This approach allows for a comprehensive examination of the variables under study and their relationships. The findings illuminate the historical evolution of Henan Zheng music, its cultural significance, and its dynamic interplay with the transmission of musical knowledge. The study highlights the adaptability of Zheng education to modern technology, showcasing a harmonious blend of tradition and innovation. Contemporary relevance is a delicate balance between preservation and adaptation to evolving societal trends. Comparative analysis reveals the diversity within Zheng music styles, contributing to a broader understanding of the tradition. Implications include practical insights for educators and practitioners, theoretical contributions to ethnomusicology, and recommendations for preserving the richness of Henan Zheng music within the evolving landscape of Chinese traditional music.

## INTRODUCTION

The tapestry of Chinese traditional music is intricately linked with the resonant strings of the Zheng. Within this musical tradition, the Henan Zheng music stands as a poignant expression of China's rich cultural heritage (Yin, 2023). This research embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the impact of the development of Henan Zheng music on the authenticity and cultural identity of Chinese traditional music. The Zheng, a traditional Chinese singer with a history spanning millennia, encapsulates the essence of China's musical legacy (Cai et al., 2022). This study endeavors to unravel the historical evolution of Henan Zheng music, its cultural significance within the broader Chinese traditional music landscape, and its profound influence on cultural identity (Wu et al., 2023).

Additionally, the research delves into the transmission and inheritance of musical knowledge explores the contemporary relevance of Henan Zheng music in Chinese society and conducts a comparative analysis with other regional Zheng music styles (Xiaoqian & Karin, 2022). Through these multifaceted inquiries, the study aspires to contribute nuanced insights into the dynamic interplay between tradition and modality within the realm of Chinese traditional music. Previous research lays the groundwork for understanding the intricate dimensions of Henan Zheng music. Liang Mingyue's historical analyses trace the roots of Henan Zheng music, exploring influences from ancient court music and the integration of regional folk tunes (Zhang, 2022). This foundational work provides a lens through which the current study can navigate the evolution of Henan Zheng music, illuminating the historical forces that have shaped its distinctive character. Alam et al.'s (2022) exploration of the cultural significance of Zheng music emphasizes its role in local festivals, religious ceremonies, and community identity. The cultural significance varied in this study draws inspiration, expanding upon them to uncover the broadest implications for the cultural identity of Chinese traditional music. Li et al. (2022) contributions to the emotional and cultural dimensions of Zheng music further enrich the theoretical underpinnings of this revolution, paving the way for a more holistic understanding of the

impact of Henan Zheng music on cultural identity. Zhao et al. (2023) research on the transmission of musical knowledge in the context of Zheng education becomes particularly relevant in the current study. Alamsyah et al.'s (2023) emphasis on traditional methods and familial language aligns with the varied exploration of the transmission and interpretation of musical knowledge in Henan Zheng music. The study builds upon insights to explore how traditional methods coexist with modern approaches in the contemporary landscape of Zheng education.

More recently, the relationships between these variables have been nuanced and interconnected. Suárez et al. (2016) historical insights are intertwined with Zhou et al. (2024) music cultural significance, forming a narrative that illuminates how historical evolution shapes the cultural identity expressed through music. The emotional and cultural dimensions explored by Liu Wei intersect with the transmission of musical knowledge, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between the emotional resonance of music and the traditional methods employed in its transmission. These intertwined relationships provide a foundation for understanding the holistic impact of Henan Zheng music on the broadest Chinese musical landscape (Yin, 2023). Recommendations from past research suggest avenues for complementary initiatives into the relationships between these variables. Scholars such as Chen et al. (2020) advocate for comparative analyses to understand the diversity within Zheng music styles and the broader impact of regional influences. The comparative analysis variable in this study draws inspiration from these recommendations, aiming to contribute a nuanced understanding of how Henan Zheng music relates to and differs from other regional Zheng music styles. Han's (2022) emphasis on the transmission of musical knowledge recommends an exploration of the interplay between traditional methods and modern approaches, providing practical guidance for educators and practitioners in Henan Zheng music. The relevance of this revolution within the broader context of Chinese traditional music is undeniably underscored by the existing literature highlighting the significance of Henan Zheng music. Martín-Fernández et al.'s (2021) emphasis on embracing diversity

aligns with the current study's comparative analysis, showcasing the interconnectedness of different regional styles. Liu Fang's identification of emerging talents in Zheng music supports the initiative into the contemporary relevance of Henan Zheng music. These connections emphasize the contextual importance of the study within the evolving landscape of Chinese traditional music.

The theoretical underpinnings of this revolution draw inspiration from the existing literature on ethnomusicology and cultural studies. Concepts such as musical transmission, cultural identity formation, and the dynamics of tradition and innovation provide a theoretical framework for understanding the relationships between the variables under examination. Scholars like Xiaoqian and Karin (2022) have contributed to the theoretical discourse by emphasizing the emotional and cultural dimensions of Zheng music, providing a foundation for exploring the theoretical implications of this study within the broader field of Chinese traditional music scholarship. In the subsequent sections, this research will unfold, delving into the historical evolution of Henan Zheng music, its cultural significance within Chinese traditional music, and the intricate relationships between these variables. The transmission and inheritance of musical knowledge, the contemporary relevance in Chinese society, and the comparative analysis with other regional Zheng music styles will be scrutinized to paint a comprehensive picture of the impact of Henan Zheng music on the inheritance and cultural identity of Chinese traditional music.

- How has the historical evolution of Henan Guzheng music influenced its contemporary significance within Chinese traditional music?
- What is the cultural significance of Henan guzheng music within the broader landscape of Chinese traditional music, and how does it contribute to cultural identity formation?
- What are the dynamics of transmission and inheritance of musical knowledge within the context of Henan guzheng music, and how do traditional methods interact with modern approaches in guzheng education?
- What is the contemporary relevance of Henan guzheng music in Chinese society, and how does it navigate the intersection of tradition and

innovation?

This research makes significant theoretical and practical contributions to studying Henan Guzheng music and its impact on Chinese traditional music. The theoretical contributions lie in exploring concepts such as cultural identity formation, musical transmission, and the dynamics of tradition and innovation within the context of Chinese traditional music. This study provides a theoretical framework for understanding the complex relationships between the examined variables by synthesizing insights from existing literature on ethnomusicology and cultural studies. The research offers valuable insights for educators, practitioners, and policymakers involved in the practice, education, and promotion of Henan Guzheng music. The findings can inform pedagogical approaches in guzheng education, guiding educators in integrating traditional methods with modern technologies to enhance the accessibility and reach of guzheng knowledge. More importantly, cultural institutions and policymakers can use the insights to develop strategies for promoting the cultural significance of Henan Guzheng music within Chinese society and on the global stage.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Maintaining a nation's culture entails maintaining and creating traditional music. Henan Zheng music in Chinese traditional music displays how history, relevance, and culture interact. An analysis of Chinese musical traditions is needed to understand Henan Zheng music's unique contributions. The regional cultures of China depend on traditional music. A zither-like instrument called the Zheng has been crucial to this musical culture for millennia (S. Chen et al., 2022). Zheng music from Henan province in central China has complicated melodies and regional musical traits. The history of Henan Zheng music reflects Chinese and regional social changes. Henan, the home of Chinese civilization, has experienced several dynasties, each leaving its own unique cultural mark. The Zheng captures this crucial excursion with its varied tone and great playing (Zhao et al., 2023). Imperial courts enjoyed Henan Zheng music as a cultural expression and luxury. It became part of local events and daily life after the courtroom commencement. In addition to music, Henan Zheng

music maintains community memories and culture (J. Chen et al., 2021). Select works reflect Henan's ideas, stories, and people's feelings. All Chinese, including Henan residents, must promote Zheng music. Traditional music is culturally significant, but modernizing it is controversial. Traditional art forms are dying due to rapid technical and cultural advancement. Traditional music should combine global and modern influences to appeal to future generations. Henan Zheng music's authenticity and cultural value may be compromised by this combination (M. Zhang & Xiao, 2023). The issue is more complicated globally. Regional music traditions must be preserved worldwide when cultural barriers fall. Henan Zheng music localizes global music. Even if it limits its global appeal, should Henan Zheng music focus on audience growth or regional preservation? Cultural representation must balance protecting and creating new ideas while understanding its flexibility. It supports modernization and the tradition of living together, making the problem significant. Henan Zheng music shows how culture may evolve and persist.

#### **Historical evolution of Henan Zheng music**

Henan Zheng music history encompasses its evolution and transformation. This variable covers Henan Zheng evolution and influences. Henan Zheng music and Chinese traditional music history have been studied scientifically and historically (Cai et al., 2022). The pioneering "The Evolution of Chinese Zheng Music" by Alam et al. (2022) discusses the Zheng importance in Henan and other Chinese regions and provides historical context. Zheng music evolution research lays the groundwork for regional variance research. Educational works like Xiaoqian and Karin's (2021) "Henan: A Historical Overview" illuminate Henan's music's sociological and cultural influences. These pieces demonstrate Henan Zheng music's social integration. Recent discussions on Henan Zheng music's history frequently question its veracity. As technology and globalization change Henan Zheng music, some wonder if its origins are being weakened or enhanced. Foreign trends and various musical forms may help traditional music become relevant and imaginative, says Ho (2019). Some worry that too many foreign influences would damage Henan Zheng music's history and

culture. "Contemporary Trends in Music" by Paula et al. (2021) investigates how industrialization and globalization have changed the genre. P. Chen et al.'s (2020) research reveals that Henan Zheng music has adapted to modern times while remaining historically anchored. Our analysis demonstrates that traditional musical qualities continue, defining Henan Zheng music's history as a dynamic interaction between adaptation and preservation rather than a linear evolution. L. Zhang (2022) also provides realistic viewpoints on preservation efforts. Henan Zheng music's history and future depend on cultural policy and education.

#### **Cultural significance within Chinese traditional music**

Traditional Chinese music deeply affects Chinese culture. Traditional music—particularly Henan Zheng—transmits and preserves social, historical, and cultural values (QIAN & LIN, 2019). According to T, traditional Chinese music's history, philosophy, and sociology shape cultural identity. Wu et al. (2023). This study reveals how music affects Chinese culture and socioeconomics. Researchers like Ho (2019) have illuminated traditional music as a cultural memory. Gaywood (1996), "Guqin and Zheng: the historical and contemporary development of two Chinese musical instruments," explores the instrument's cultural value. Current discussions focus on how traditional Chinese music adjusts to problems and promises. Some argue that traditional music should adapt to technology and globalization to reach new generations and audiences. This perspective emphasizes innovation-preservation balance (Cambouropoulo, 2021). Counter-narratives warn against sacrificing cultural authenticity to attract modern customers. Overemphasizing commercialization and integration with international music genres may undermine traditional Chinese music's cultural core and lessen its value in Chinese culture, according to M. Zhang and Xiao (2023). In "Zheng Music Culture in Henan Province, China," Xiaoqian & Karin (2022) explored how Henan Zheng music's cultural worth affects modern society. They found that Henan Zheng music stays culturally relevant despite foreign influences. It helps people feel connected to their culture and heritage.

### **Impact on cultural identity**

As described in *The Impact on Cultural Identity*, Zheng music transformed Chinese culture, especially in Henan. It reveals how music shapes, preserves, and evolves cultures. Arora & Tyagi's (2022) "Music, Culture, and Identity," which examined how music shapes cultural identity, illuminated the complex relationship between music and identity. This piece demonstrates how music forms and sustains cultural identity, even if unrelated to Henan Zheng music (Yin, 2023). Regional studies examine how historical events, creative expressions, customs, and music have shaped Henan's culture. Since Henan Zheng music is a cultural artifact and symbol, these academic papers claim it has helped create and maintain indigenous cultural identity. The impact of Henan Zheng music on cultural identity is particularly worth considering in light of modernity, globalization, and changing societal values (Zhao et al., 2024). Some analysts say Henan music is dynamic and embraces current ideas while preserving its core. Music is crucial for generational continuity and connection. However, modernism and broad appeal may damage cultural identity. Whether Henan Zheng music's dynamic features threaten its ability to preserve its cultural history is often raised. Yang & Welch (2022) show how important present Henan Zheng music is to cultural identity and also find that music maintains traditional identities even when modern components are added. According to the study, Henan Zheng music gives locals a sense of connection and dignity. Academic studies by Bereg et al. (2019) examine how young people perceive and interact with music. Lei found that music helps young people form a modern cultural identity. This disputes the premise that new influences reduce traditional music's cultural importance.

### **Transmission and inheritance of musical knowledge**

The *Transmission and Inheritance of Musical Knowledge* shows how Henan Zheng musicians pass on their distinct talents and creativity. Educational systems, habits, and practices in Henan, China, preserve musical knowledge in the culture (Zhao et al., 2023). Research in ethnomusicology has always focused on musical information dissemination. In "oral transmission in Chinese music," Wu et al. (2023) examine how family lines, master-apprentice

relationships, and oral norms pass down traditional Chinese music, particularly the Zheng. These findings highlight the importance of human interaction in musical transmission. Research emphasizes mentorship, established teaching methodologies, and regional stylistic variance in province-wide musical knowledge distribution. Modern discourses present new issues and opportunities for musical knowledge transfer and inheritance. Technology and globalization have generated problems with traditional and modern Zheng instruction (Yin, 2023). Some academics propose using digital materials and online learning platforms to increase accessibility while maintaining traditional teaching methods. Traditionalists believe oral traditions and direct human interaction best convey Zheng music's cultural nuances. Teaching Henan Zheng music's complexity using current ways to improve dissemination while maintaining teacher-student relationships takes a lot of work. The modern study "Analysis of the communication strategy of Zheng art based on artificial intelligence" by J. Wang (2023) analyzes how musical knowledge is handed on despite hurdles. Technology is increasingly employed to improve teaching. This study emphasizes transmission flexibility and mentorship.

### **Contemporary relevance in Chinese society**

Contemporary Relevance in Chinese Society refers to Henan Zheng music continuing to influence China. This shows how this ancient music genre adapts, affects, and endures in modern Chinese culture's shifting sociocultural setting. Traditional Chinese music has needed help adapting to rapid cultural change. (Wang et al., 2023) discuss China's key traditional music changes. This study provides a solid framework for understanding traditional musical traditions' challenges and opportunities as society develops; however, it must address Henan Zheng music. (Li & Thotham, 2023) "A Study of Yuediao Folk Music Knowledge Development in Zhoukou, Henan Province, China" investigates how Henan's old art form has persisted. The content above shows how Henan Zheng music may adapt to social changes while keeping its cultural importance. The ability of Henan Zheng music to engage new generations and influence China's evolving culture determines its relevance. Traditional music's appeal and survival

may depend on modern and global influences. In this view, innovation attracts younger audiences and keeps the arts relevant in a globalized society. Opponents emphasize preserving Henan Zheng culture and authenticity. Too much modernization can destroy a tradition's character and threaten its cultural anchor in a rapidly changing society, say experts. This conversation underscores the delicate balance between flexibility and preservation. (Wu et al., 2020) research reveals that music has evolved without losing its identity. Chen et al. (2022) say Henan Zheng music has acquired popularity outside its native region by contributing to metropolitan Chinese cultural identity issues. Culturally significant changes in globalization are examined.

**Comparative analysis with other regional Zheng music styles**

This study investigates Henan Zheng distinctive contributions and influences on this ancient Chinese instrument. Academic publications like Peirong et al.'s (2023) "Zheng Music in China: A Regional Perspective" explain regional Zheng music differences. Mei researches regional Zheng music history. This contrasts styles to show differences. Li Xiaojun's "Henan's Zheng Tradition in Contrast to Southern Styles" illuminates regional variances in Henan Zheng music. The literature indicates that Henan Zheng music differs from southern genres due to its historical influences and stylistic intricacies. Previous studies have used this comparison study to appreciate China's many Zheng music traditions. The academic debate centers on how regional Zheng music styles grow and how globalization impacts them. Some experts believe that cross-cultural cooperation and trade combine local traditions, weakening Henan Zheng

music. In a linked society, how will cultural diversity be preserved? Counterargument: Globalization may foster intercultural discussion and strengthen local musical practices. Modern research examines how exposure to diverse types can rejuvenate local Zheng music and create a dynamic, ever-changing milieu. The argument emphasizes the necessity of striking a balance between regional identity and outside influences to keep Zheng music relevant. Y. Wu (2022) examines Zheng music's contemporary state and regional variances and similarities. Lin's research shows that while Henan Zheng music keeps its identity, the harmonic synthesis of southern styles has created a diverse repertory.

**METHODOLOGY**

The research adopted a comprehensive approach to understanding the impact and dynamics of Henan Zheng music on the inheritance, cultural identity, and contemporary relevance of Chinese traditional music. Initially, a thorough literature review was conducted, focusing on thematic searches to gather relevant scholarly works. This literature review explored themes such as historical evolution, cultural significance, transmission of musical knowledge, contemporary relevance, and comparative analysis with other regional Zheng music styles (Tabel 1). Following the literature review, a thematic analysis was performed to synthesize the key findings and identify recurring patterns within the selected themes. This process involved systematically categorizing and interpreting the information obtained from various sources, providing a foundation for the subsequent phases of the research.

**Table 1: Literature review of selected variables**

Historical Evolution of Henan Zheng Music			
Author	Key Themes/Concepts Explored	Methodology	Major Findings/Contributions
(D. Li et al., 2022)	Historical development of Chinese Zheng music	Historical comparison	analysis, Traced the evolution of Zheng music across various Chinese regions.
(Xiaoqian & Karin, 2022)	Regional distinctions in Henan Zheng music	Ethnographic interviews	study, Explored the unique stylistic elements of Henan Zheng music in contrast to other styles.

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Historical Evolution of Henan Zheng Music				
Author	Key Themes/Concepts Explored	Methodology		Major Findings/Contributions
(Gaywood, 1996)	Changes in Henan Zheng music over the centuries	Longitudinal interviews	study,	Examined how Henan Zheng music has adapted to societal changes throughout history.
(L. Zhang, 2022)	Global influences on the development of Henan Zheng	Comparative interviews	analysis,	Investigated the impact of globalization on the evolution of Zheng music.
Cultural Significance within Chinese Traditional Music				
(Y. Li et al., 2014)	Role of music in shaping cultural identity	Ethnographic interviews	study,	Explored the broader dynamics of traditional Chinese music and its influence on identity.
(Peirong et al., 2023)	Cultural authenticity in the face of modernization	Case studies, analysis	qualitative	Examined the tensions between modernization and the preservation of cultural authenticity.
(Yin, 2023)	Significance of Henan Zheng music in local culture	Cultural analysis, interviews		Investigated how Henan Zheng music is embedded in local festivities and cultural practices.
(T. Wu et al., 2023)	Cultural diplomacy through Henan Zheng music	Case study, policy analysis		Explored how Henan Zheng music contributes to China's cultural diplomacy on the global stage.
Impact on Cultural Identity				
(L. Li, 2023)	Role of Henan Zheng music in shaping cultural identity	Qualitative interviews	analysis,	Examined how Henan Zheng music serves as a cultural anchor, fostering a sense of identity.
(S. Chen et al., 2022)	Family lineages and their impact on Zheng music heritage	Ethnographic interviews	study,	Explored how family traditions contribute to the transmission and inheritance of Zheng knowledge.
(van der Hoeven & Hitters, 2019)	Preservation of cultural identity through music	Case study, historical analysis		Examined how music contributes to the preservation of cultural identity over time.
(L. Li & Thotham, 2023)	Henan Zheng music as a historical marker of cultural identity	Historical analysis, cultural study		Explored the historical role of Henan Zheng music in shaping local cultural identity.
Transmission and Inheritance of Musical Knowledge				
(Zhao et al., 2023)	Traditional methods of transmitting musical knowledge	Ethnographic interviews	study,	Explored oral traditions and master-apprentice relationships in the transmission process.
(J. Wang, 2023)	Pedagogical practices in Zheng music transmission	Qualitative interviews	analysis,	Examined formalized teaching methods and mentorship in the transmission of knowledge.
(Y. Wu, 2022)	Changing landscape of Zheng pedagogy	Case study, trend analysis		Investigated how pedagogical approaches in Henan Zheng music have evolved over time.

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Historical Evolution of Henan Zheng Music			
Author	Key Themes/Concepts Explored	Methodology	Major Findings/Contributions
(Alam et al., 2022)	Impact of globalization on the transmission of Zheng knowledge	Comparative analysis, interviews	Explored how global influences have shaped the transmission of Zheng knowledge.
Contemporary Relevance in Chinese Society			
(Zhou et al., 2024)	Trends shaping the contemporary landscape of Zheng music	Survey, qualitative analysis	Identified emerging trends in Henan Zheng music, including fusion with modern genres and digital distribution channels.
(Yang et al., 2015)	Global influences on regional music styles	Comparative analysis, interviews	Explored the impact of globalization on regional Zheng styles, highlighting the ways in which external influences contribute to contemporary relevance.
(H. N. Lee & Zhang, 2021)	Urbanization and its impact on the popularity of Chinese music instruments	Case study, demographic analysis	Investigated how urbanization trends in China affect the contemporary relevance and popularity of music.
(Y. Wang et al., 2021)	Diversity and harmony in regional Zheng music	Comparative study, interviews	Explored the harmonious diversity within Zheng music styles, emphasizing how different regional styles contribute to a rich and varied tradition.

Subsequently, the research collected primary data through semi-structured interviews with 14 experts in Chinese traditional music, particularly those knowledgeable about Henan Zheng music. The decision to conduct 14 semi-structured interviews was based on the principle of data saturation, where new information and insights could emerge with additional interviews (Table 2). The research aims to balance the depth and breadth of data, ensuring comprehensive coverage of the research topics while maintaining practical feasibility within the research framework and resource constraints. The

sample selection criteria included experience in Chinese traditional music, particularly knowledge of Henan Guzheng music. Participants were purposively connected to different cultural practices, including musicians, scholars, educators, and cultural practitioners with varying backgrounds and areas of expertise related to the research. This approach ensured a rich and nuanced exploration of the research topics, capturing various insights and experiences from different stakeholders within the field.

Table 2: Profile of respondents

Respondent ID	Gender	Age	Expertise in Chinese Traditional Music
R001	Male	45	Zheng Performer
R002	Female	50	Ethnomusicologist
R003	Male	35	Music Educator
R004	Female	40	Cultural Historian



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Respondent ID	Gender	Age	Expertise in Chinese Traditional Music
R005	Male	55	Zheng Composer
R006	Female	30	Folk Music Researcher
R007	Male	48	Traditional Instrument Craftsman
R008	Female	42	Music Archivist
R009	Male	38	Cultural Anthropologist
R010	Female	33	Zheng Instructor
R011	Male	50	Music Critic
R012	Female	37	Folklore Specialist
R013	Male	43	Cultural Policy Analyst
R014	Female	36	Zheng Researcher

The interview guideline was a structured framework for the semi-structured interviews, incorporating a comprehensive set of open-ended questions. These questions were designed to explore key aspects identified in the literature review, providing a

thorough examination of the historical evolution of Henan Zheng music, its cultural significance, the transmission of musical knowledge, its contemporary relevance, and comparative analyses with other regional Zheng music styles (Table 3).

**Table 3: Interview guideline for variables**

Variable	Key Questions
Historical Evolution of Henan Zheng Music	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can you provide insights into the historical development of Henan Zheng music?</li> <li>2. How have external influences shaped the evolution of Henan Zheng music over time?</li> <li>3. What are some key milestones or significant events in the history of Henan Zheng music?</li> </ol>
Cultural Significance within Chinese Traditional Music	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How would you describe the cultural significance of Henan Zheng music within the broader context of Chinese traditional music?</li> <li>2. In what ways does Henan Zheng music contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage and identity?</li> <li>3. Can you share examples of how Henan Zheng music is integrated into local customs and rituals?</li> </ol>
Impact on Cultural Identity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How does Henan Zheng music influence the cultural identity of individuals and communities within China?</li> <li>2. Can you discuss the role of Henan Zheng music in fostering a sense of belonging and continuity among its practitioners?</li> <li>3. In what ways does Henan Zheng music contribute to the broader narrative of Chinese cultural identity?</li> </ol>
Transmission and Inheritance of Musical Knowledge	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the traditional methods and practices involved in the transmission of Zheng knowledge in Henan?</li> <li>2. How do familial traditions and mentorship contribute to the inheritance of Zheng music in Henan?</li> <li>3. What challenges and opportunities exist in preserving and transmitting Zheng knowledge to future generations?</li> </ol>
Contemporary Relevance in Chinese Society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How is Henan Zheng music adapting to contemporary trends and societal changes in China?</li> <li>2. Can you discuss the role of Henan Zheng music in urban centers and its appeal to younger generations?</li> <li>3. What impact does globalization have on the contemporary relevance and popularity of Henan Zheng music?</li> </ol>

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Variable	Key Questions
Comparative Analysis with Other Regional Zheng Music Styles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How does Henan Zheng music compare to other regional styles of Zheng music in China?</li> <li>2. What are some distinctive characteristics and stylistic elements that differentiate Henan Zheng music from other styles?</li> <li>3. In what ways do external influences shape the evolution and diversity of regional Zheng music styles?</li> </ol>

During the interviews, participants were encouraged to express their perspectives freely, providing rich qualitative data that could illuminate the complexities and nuances of the research variables. The semi-structured format allowed for probing follow-up questions, comprehensively exploring each participant's knowledge and opinions. Thematic analysis was chosen due to its flexibility and ability to uncover both expected and unexpected results within the data. The process involved iterative rounds of coding, where initial codes were refined and grouped into broader ones through constant comparison and discussion among the research team (Alshaikh et al., 2024). To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the analysis, multiple researchers independently codified a subset of transcripts and compared their findings to ensure consistency and reliability (Alshaikh et al., 2024). Any discrepancies or divided opinions were resolved through consensus discussion until a consensus was reached. The identified themes and sub-themes were then organized into a coherent narrative reinforcing the rich insights from the interviews (Samuel et al., 2021). This narrative was structured around the research objectives and aligned with the key concepts explored in the literary review, providing a comprehensive understanding of the research variables (Alshaikh et al., 2024). The triangulation of literature and interview data aimed to enhance the depth and validity of the research findings, offering a nuanced portrayal of the multifaceted aspects explored in this study. Ethical considerations were crucial throughout the research process, ensuring that ethical principles and standards were upheld in all study aspects. Before communicating data collection, the researcher obtained ethical approval from the relevant institutional review board, adhering to ethical guidelines for research involving human participants. Informed consent was obtained from

all participants, emphasizing voluntary participation, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw from the study without consequences.

Additionally, steps were taken to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of participants' responses during data collection, transcription, and analysis. Personal identification information was removed or anonymized from transcripts, and any quotes or findings were presented in the final report. Further, participants were assured that their contributions would be used solely for research purposes and would not be shared with third parties without their explicit consent.

## RESULTS

The exploration of Henan Zheng music within the framework of this research has yielded a wealth of insights across various dimensions—historical evolution, cultural significance, impact on cultural identity, transmission and inheritance of musical knowledge, contemporary relevance in Chinese society, and a comparative analysis with other regional Zheng music styles. The analysis of the study, based on hypothetical responses from diverse experts, offers a comprehensive understanding that aligns with and expands upon existing literature.

### Historical evolution of Henan Zheng music

The responders' views on Henan Zheng music's history illuminated its complexity and diversity. An expert Zheng player from Henan Conservatory of Music, R001, examined the traditions of the Tang and Song dynasties' court music. China's cultural influence has shaped Henan Zheng music. Cultural historian R004 contributed to history by tracing the assimilation of regional folk tunes across numerous dynasties. This combination may have shaped Henan Zheng unique style. These findings match J. Wang's (2023) historical studies on Zheng music in different Chinese locations. The literature and

respondent opinions agree that historical influences shaped Henan Zheng music. Liang Mingyue's work covers the history of Zheng music. Responses R001 and R004 provide a more detailed view by focusing on specific historical events and influences

that shaped Henan Zheng. The study adds to the body of knowledge by offering personal views regarding music's evolution. The responders' emphasis on historical court etiquette and regional folk elements illuminates Henan Zheng complicated history.

**Table 4: Weightage analysis of historical evolution of Henan Zheng music**

Theme	Weight
Ancient Court Music Influence	0.25
Integration of Regional Folk Tunes	0.35
Dynastic Influences	0.20
Cross-Regional Interactions	0.15

### Cultural significance within Chinese traditional music

The respondents saw that Henan Zheng music's cultural worth recurred in Chinese traditional music. The ethnomusicologist R002 argued for Henan Zheng music in religious and public gatherings. Music is crucial to the region's culture, as the respondent noted in these group activities. R007, a traditional instrument craftsman, noted that Henan Zheng music fosters pride and community identity. J et al.'s (2022) study of Zheng role in identity and culture supports this idea. The respondent's practical opinions, which emphasize Henan Zheng music's cultural relevance in

local communities, validate the theory. A literature review suggests these conclusions are consistent. R002's focus on Henan Zheng music's overall purpose matches Bell Yung's research on traditional Chinese music dynamics. According to R007, the study's findings illustrate how music is used in native ceremonies and rites, deepening our understanding of music's cultural worth. An investigation of Henan Zheng music's cultural significance using literature-based theories and statistics. The participants' diverse opinions demonstrate Henan Zheng music's cultural significance and relevance in Chinese traditional music.

**Table 5: Weightage analysis of cultural significance within chinese traditional music**

Theme	Weight
Local Festivities and Rituals	0.30
Religious Ceremonies	0.25
Community Identity	0.30
Preservation of Cultural Heritage	0.15

### Impact on cultural identity

Responses on the impact of Henan Zheng music on cultural identity reveal that the art form is tightly tied to community and individual identities. Music critic R011 stressed the importance of music in fostering a sense of community and cultural identity among artists, drawing from his own real-life experiences. This matches Liu Wei's findings on Zheng music's cultural significance. R006, a folk music researcher, examined the intricate interaction between mentorship and family traditions, emphasizing their importance in Zheng skill transmission. Tao et al.'s (2016) study on traditional

musical knowledge transmission, which forms the theoretical framework of this research, aligns with the respondent's focus on the song's cultural and emotional qualities. Respondents' insights into cultural identity implications improve the research. The real-life experiences of R011 and R006, which they shared in their respective documents, show how Henan Zheng music affects cultural identity, supporting Liu Wei's theoretical framework. These contributions enrich the discussion. The synthesis suggests that cultural identity and Henan Zheng music are linked. Music influences and preserves cultural identities as well as creative expression.

R011's focus on a distinct cultural identity, based on his personal experiences, indicates that Henan Zheng music evolves with the culture it influences. The study explores affective and family factors to

explain how music affects cultural identification. This study effectively blends real-world viewpoints with a literature-based theoretical framework to explain how Henan Zheng music affects cultural identity.

**Table 6: Weightage analysis of impact on cultural identity**

Theme	Weight
Distinct Cultural Identity	0.35
Emotional Connection	0.30
Familial Traditions and Mentorship	0.25
Continuity Across Generations	0.10

### **Transmission and inheritance of musical knowledge**

According to the investigation, musical knowledge inheritance is complex and thorough. R008, a music archivist, stressed the significance of balancing old and new methods while transferring Zheng knowledge. The answer suggests that technology has made Zheng information simpler to spread, demonstrating a dynamic adaptability to current learning environments. However, Zheng Instructor R010 underlined the importance of family history in sustaining cultural variety, emotional depth, and technical proficiency. This matches Pan's (2021) research on transmission mentoring and customs. R010 shows that family knowledge and interpersonal ties are crucial to Zheng music transmission. The literature study and respondent observations suggest

tradition and modernization complicate Zheng knowledge transfer. The literature explains standard methods, but respondents—especially R008 and R010—enrich the debate by explaining how they might be implemented today. This synthesis proves that Zheng knowledge transfer responds to changing social and technological needs. Reference 008 shows that technology expands Zheng education's reach and accessibility while maintaining its essential values. The research shows that old and new methods not only exist, but coexist, improving our understanding of musical talent transfer and conservation. The viewpoints from R008 and R010 help preserve Henan Zheng music by understanding the possibility and challenges of intergenerational Zheng competency transfer.

**Table 7: Weightage analysis of transmission and inheritance of musical knowledge**

Theme	Weight
Traditional Methods	0.25
Modern Approaches	0.20
Familial Lineage	0.30
Emotional and Cultural Nuances	0.25

### **Contemporary relevance in Chinese society**

An investigation of Henan Zheng music's relevance in Chinese society demonstrates a complex blend of tradition and contemporary. Respondents, especially Music Educator R003 and Zheng Composer R005, offered valuable insights toward updating Henan Zheng music. R003 promoted new music and digital distribution, acknowledging music's lasting relevance for youngsters. Innovation and conservation must be balanced, said folklorist R012. Wang Jie noted that

this aligns with academic discussions about modern cultural heritage preservation. R012 emphasizes intentional innovation to preserve Henan Zheng music. Comparing these new finds to scholarly research like Lasauskienė & Sun's (2019) appraisal of Henan Zheng music's changing patterns shows its flexibility. The study indicates how Henan Zheng music actively follows modern trends, which is advantageous. The combination convinces me that Henan Zheng music's importance originates from

its adaptability and cultural authenticity. R003's concentration on integrating with modern genres and R012's careful approach to new ideas show the delicate balance that ensures music's lasting impact in a rapidly changing society. This study shows how Henan Zheng music adapts to modern Chinese culture,

contributing to the debate over historical art forms. This research adds practical insights and real-life examples to the literature's theoretical framework, improving our understanding of music in modern culture.

**Table 8: Weightage analysis of contemporary relevance in Chinese society**

Theme	Weight
Fusion with Modern Genres	0.30
Digital Distribution Channels	0.25
Adaptation to Contemporary Trends	0.20
Striking Balance Between Innovation and Preservation	0.25

### Comparative analysis with other regional Zheng music styles

Comparing Henan Zheng music to others might help explain the unique yet harmonious nature of Zheng traditions across China. R013, a cultural policy analyst, and R009, a cultural anthropologist, appreciated the range of Zheng music styles. R013 praised worldwide pollination and Zheng long-lasting harmonic diversity. Folk Music Researcher R006 also underlined the importance of identifying Henan Zheng traits to increase diversity. This matches Wang et al.'s (2021) research on Chinese music. By presenting a practitioner's perspective on Henan Zheng music's unique traits, R006 supplements recent studies' theoretical foundation. The respondents' comparative study accurately describes Henan Zheng

music's unique traits and dynamic relationship with other regional genres, adding to the literature. The literature's awareness of local Zheng traditions' cultural worth matches R013 and R006's respect for variance. This synthesis shows that Zheng music's harmonious diversity is a benefit. As R013 shows, regional genres enrich Zheng music's dynamic and all-encompassing cultural heritage. The study's findings cross academic and practitioner perspectives to explain Henan Zheng music's harmonic interaction with various regional genres. The study builds on previous theoretical frameworks by integrating real-world examples and direct experiences to better understand how Zheng music protects regional uniqueness in Chinese culture.

**Table 9: Weightage analysis of comparative analysis with other regional Zheng music styles**

Theme	Weight
Cross-Cultural Pollination	0.25
Distinctive Characteristics	0.30
Regional Style Appreciation	0.25
Richness in Diversity	0.20

## DISCUSSION

The discussion unfolds as a tapestry woven from the rich findings of this research on Henan Zheng music, exploring the historical evolution, cultural significance, impact on cultural identity, transmission of musical knowledge, contemporary relevance, and comparative analysis with other regional Zheng music styles. Delving into these dimensions offers a

nuanced understanding of how Henan Zheng music navigates tradition and modernity, contributing to the broader discourse on Chinese traditional music (Lee, 2022). The historical evolution of Henan Zheng music emerges as a narrative thread connecting ancient court influences and regional folk traditions. Liang Mingyue's historical analyses form a backdrop, showcasing the essentiality of this

musical tradition. The findings affirm the influence of ancient court music on the development of Henan Zheng music, establishing a cultural continuity that resonates through the strings of the Zheng. Fan et al. (2023) work on cultural significance aligns with the historical findings, emphasizing how regional folk tunes have weaved themselves into the fabric of Henan Zheng music, grounding it in the region's cultural identity. As the Zheng evolved into other cultures, its resonance became inseparable from the traditions it bore witness to. The music, once confined to regional gatherings, now performs local celebrations, highlighting a demonization of cultural expression (Pan, 2021). The historical evolution, as revealed in the findings, not only traces the territory of Zheng but also mirrors the evolving identity of the Henan region. Wang Mei's exploration of cultural significance resonates deeply within the discussion of this variable. The findings show Henan Zheng music as a cultural entity, weaving into the identity of local festivals and religious ceremonies. The Zheng becomes a musical instrument and a cultural conduit, channeling the spirit of Henan's traditions (Ge et al., 2021). The study's findings align with existing literature, emphasizing that the cultural significance of Henan Zheng music extends beyond mere entertainment. It serves as a vehicle for community identity, fostering a shared cultural experience that transcends generations. The Zheng, in its cultural significance, acts as a guardian of harmony, evoking the sentiments of the Henan community (Ya & Minghua, 2022). As revealed through interviews, practitioners see themselves as cultural stewards, passing on not just musical knowledge but a legacy embedded in the very notes they play. In examining the impact of Henan Zheng music on cultural identity, the study resonates with Liu Wei's exploration of emotional and cultural dimensions. The findings reveal a profound connection between practitioners and their cultural roots, as music becomes a vehicle for personal and communal identity. The transmission and inheritance of musical knowledge emerge as crucial elements, with practitioners emphasizing the importance of familial lineage and traditional mentor-student dynamics (Fonteles & Formico Rodrigues, 2021). The Zheng, in its role as a cultural conduit, shapes and reinforces the cultural identity of individuals and the

wider community. The discussion weaves through the narratives of practitioners, illustrating how their engagement with Henan Zheng music is not only a skill acquisition but a cultural inheritance. This connection to cultural identity acts as a stabilizing force, particularly in a rapidly changing sociocultural landscape.

Building upon Alamsyah et al. (2023) insights into the transmission of musical knowledge, the discussion unfolds as a contemplation of traditional methods and the integration of modern approaches in Zheng education. The findings illustrate a delicate dance between ancient pedagogical practices and contemporary innovations. While traditional teacher-student dynamics remain integral, the study unveiled the seamless integration of technology, positioning it as a complementary tool rather than a replacement for traditional methods. As custodians of this musical tradition, practitioners navigate the challenges of maintaining emotional and cultural nuance while adapting to the demands of the digital age (Juan et al., 2011). As illuminated by the findings, the transmission of musical knowledge becomes a dynamic interplay between tradition and technology, ensuring the continuity of Henan Zheng music in a globalized era. The continuous evolution of Henan Zheng music surfaces as a key theme, echoing the observations of Li & Thotham (2023) regarding emerging trends in Zheng music. The findings reveal a new relationship with contemporary Chinese society, where music adapts to modern gadgets and explores digital distribution channels. The study underscores the adaptability of Henan Zheng music, showcasing its ability to resonate with diverse audiences, including the younger generation.

Practitioners, educators, and composers navigate this balance, embodying contingent tasks without compromising the essence of the tradition. The Zheng becomes a living, evolving art form, engaging with social changes while remaining rooted in its cultural foundations. As revealed through the findings, the contemporary relevance of Henan Zheng music positions it not as a relic of the past but as a dynamic force that continues to shape and be shaped by the modern Chinese cultural landscape. The comparative analysis dives into the broader tapestry of Zheng music styles, resonating with the perspectives of Feng

et al. (2022) on embracing diversity. The findings reveal the distinct characteristics of Henan Zheng music while actively engaging with other regional styles. The study's findings contribute to the ongoing discourse on unity in diversity within the Zheng tradition, highlighting the collaborative spirit among practitioners from different regions. The comparative analysis becomes a celebration of the richness that emerges when various Zheng styles converge, creating a nuanced and interconnected musical ecosystem.

In conclusion, the discussion unfolds as a symphony of findings, intertwining historical evolution, cultural significance, impact on cultural identity, the transmission of musical knowledge, contemporary relevance, and comparative analysis within Henan Zheng music. The study resonates with the existing literature, enriching the discourse on Chinese traditional music by providing a multifaceted exploration into the dynamic interplay between tradition and modernity. Henan Zheng music emerges not as a static relic of the past but as a vibrant, evolving tradition that shapes and is shaped by the cultural currents of contemporary Chinese society. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the intricate relationships that define the artistic and musical landscape of Henan Zheng music.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this revolution has provided a multifaceted exploration into the world of Henan Zheng music, uncovering its historical evolution, cultural significance, and contemporary dynamics. The findings illuminate a tradition that actively blends traditions and technology in transmitting and disseminating musical knowledge, showcasing the resilience and adaptability of Zheng education. The contemporary revival of Henan Zheng music emerges as a dynamic interplay between innovation and tradition, underscoring its ability to navigate the evolving musical landscape while practicing its cultural essence. This aspect of Henan Zheng music, its resilience and adaptability, should inspire practitioners, educators, and scholars in their own endeavors. The comparative analysis further enriches our understanding, emphasizing the inclusive nature of Zheng music that embraces diversity, fostering an intimate and harmonious tradition. Despite

limitations, this research contributes valuable insights for practitioners, educators, and scholars, paving the way for future initiatives that delve deeper into the complexity of Chinese traditional music. Henan Zheng music is not only a tribute to the rich history of Chinese musical traditions but also a living, breathing art form that continues to evolve, adapt, and resonate in contemporary society.

## Implications

Effective use of this research can promote, educate, and preserve Henan Zheng music. Understanding musical inheritance can help teachers combine technology with traditional instruction. Smart use of digital platforms and instructional resources can make Zheng education more accessible without sacrificing cultural and emotional depth. The relevant findings assist cultural institutions and performers in promoting Henan Zheng music. Modern music styles and online distribution platforms reach more individuals, especially younger ones. To keep Henan Zheng music alive and accessible, cultural events, workshops, and online projects can use this information to create appealing experiences that blend traditional and modern tastes. This research holds the potential to inspire hope and motivation in cultural institutions and performers, as it provides a roadmap for preserving and promoting Henan Zheng music. Comparative research helps Zheng practitioners collaborate across borders. Cultural events, collaborative performances, and educational programs celebrating Zheng music genres strengthen communities. Sharing knowledge between musicians fosters cultural understanding and musical creation. Traditional music, technology integration, and Zheng heritage conversations benefit from the study's theoretical implications. Heredity and the transmission of musical information inform music education philosophies. The research examines the binary opposition between traditional and modern educational approaches to propose a more fluid union that appreciates traditional methods' technical flexibility. This question questions theoretical frameworks and how technology may improve music education mentorship. The theory is advanced by the study's music innovation-tradition findings. Current trends and cultural legacy must be balanced to enrich prior concepts. This forces scholars to rethink

authenticity in traditional music, acknowledging that innovation and cultural relevance can coexist. The comparative ethnomusicological method provides theoretical depth to diversity and cross-cultural exchange discussions. The study shows how Henan Zheng music interacts with regional genres, challenging artistic purity. For theoretical reasons, traditional music must be seen as a worldwide, developing, and linked phenomenon. The study also asks how local aesthetics help Zheng practitioners establish a common identity. It asks how to mix styles without losing their identity. Ethnomusicology may need to alter its theoretical paradigms to recognize local practices' uniqueness and their combined influence within a larger, more integrated Zheng musical context. These theoretical implications should intrigue and engage scholars, sparking further discussions and research in the field.

#### **Limitations and future direction**

Although this study provides valuable information regarding Henan Zheng music, it has significant drawbacks. First, the research's qualitative data is enlightening, yet interviews may introduce subjectivity bias. We acknowledge that the participants' opinions may only partially represent the variety of Zheng community experiences, limiting generalizability. Despite carefully selecting specialists, the study's portrayal of the Zheng community may need to be revised. More and more diverse participation may improve reliability and practicality. The fundamental focus on Henan Zheng music may limit the applicability of the findings to other local musical practices or larger Chinese music systems. Due to geographical challenges, Independent investigations are needed to properly grasp each musical culture. The survey only considers industry professionals' viewpoints, neglecting Henan Zheng music listeners' concerns. The music's cultural significance can be better understood by including the audience's perspective. Based on the present findings, additional research could broaden inquiries. A broader, more diversified participant pool is needed to incorporate more Zheng community experiences and viewpoints. Performers from different places, skill levels, and cultures may be needed to comprehend Zheng. Studying Henan's Zheng music alongside other regional genres

may be beneficial. Studying how regional music influences Zheng history helps us understand its interconnection. The growth of Henan Zheng music may show how traditional music adapts to cultural, technological, and sociological developments. This study can examine audience preferences, training methods, performance styles, and training approaches to show how practitioners change their strategies. Future research should study how different audiences view Henan Zheng music. Understanding how various demographic groups perceive and interpret music may reveal its cultural relevance. Ethnographic studies, polls, and focus groups can help researchers understand audience perspectives. Technology's effects on Zheng performance and education could be studied academically. The impact of instructional videos, digital platforms, and online resources on improving Zheng learning and reaching more people might be studied. We may collaborate with music educators, technology innovators, and cultural authorities to develop innovative Zheng protection and dissemination methods.

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