

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PRESERVING DAI PEACOCK DANCE VIA TIKTOK AS THE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM

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### ABSTRACT

This research investigates the potential of TikTok (Douyin) as a platform for preserving and promoting the Dai Peacock Dance, a traditional Chinese cultural practice. Employing a quantitative approach, the study utilized a pre-test and post-test questionnaire survey to assess changes in participants' knowledge, perceptions, and awareness before and after exposure to TikTok videos featuring the dance. The survey included multiple-choice questions designed to evaluate respondents' initial understanding of the dance, their awareness of its development, and the effectiveness of TikTok in educating and preserving this cultural practice. A total of 300 participants from Yunnan University in China and Universiti Malaya (UM) in Malaysia were surveyed. The findings indicate a significant increase in participants' knowledge of the Dai Peacock Dance, with the mean score rising from 2.07 in the pre-test to 3.68 in the post-test ( $t = -20.634$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The study also revealed an enhanced understanding of content creation on TikTok, as well as a positive shift in perceptions regarding TikTok's effectiveness in educating about the dance, with mean scores increasing from 2.43 to 3.68 and from 2.51 to 3.74, respectively. Statistical analysis confirmed that these changes were significant ( $t = -15.057$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ;  $t = -14.541$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The research aligns with existing literature suggesting that TikTok is an effective tool for spreading cultural knowledge and engaging younger audiences in the preservation of traditional practices. However, it also highlights the challenges of using TikTok for in-depth cultural education, as the platform's fast-paced nature may limit its ability to provide comprehensive context. Overall, the study concludes that TikTok holds substantial potential for promoting and preserving the Dai Peacock Dance, provided that content creators offer both engaging and informative material.

*Keywords: Dai Peacock Dance, Tiktok, Social Media Platform*

### INTRODUCTION

Dance represents the inheritance and development of culture of a special group of people. This change is not only closely related to the long-term coexistence of multiple cultures, but also has important significance for the nation, country, and world culture. Cuenca-Lopez et al., (2022) understood intangible heritage as the delocalization, entry, and development of daily life events. Hartmann (2020) believed that certain phenomena in daily life became "legacy" due to delocalization, new naming and new meanings. The discovery of the intangible cultural heritage will result in a new entry

into the territory after separation, which is the reconstruction of the meaning of daily life; and the protection of intangible heritage is to make these cultures, whether as daily life events or as cultural heritage, gain new life and develop.

National dance culture is a symbol of a nation, it shows a nation's historical tradition, life characteristics, aesthetic style, and symbolizes the prosperity and prosperity of a nation. Due to the significance of ethnic folk dance culture and the progressively disappearing of the regional ethnic folk dance cultural characteristics, we are aware of the necessity, urgency, and practical significance of protecting and inheriting ethnic folk dance culture.

The Chinese people's cultural identity is first shown through dance. This branch of art has a lengthy history and is widely accepted, supporting the fact that dance has the ability to communicate one's inner thoughts and desires. This is the most visually appealing kind of art, displaying the ethnic and cultural traits of all the countries that make up the Chinese super-ethnos while also traditionally portraying the people's national identity and serving as a testament to the continuity of Chinese civilization (Yuanyuan Yang et al., 2019).

Chinese dance, which has evolved over many centuries from the varied forms of various ethnic groups, is a distinctive and essential historical and cultural component of the evolution of the national dance art (Sun et al., 2021). In China, there are 56 ethnic groups, and each ethnic group has its own representative dances, such as Tibetan tap dance/Miao dance/Dai dance/Yi dance, etc. Among them, China's Dai ethnic group dance is one of the more distinctive representatives. To this day, traditional dances including Chinese Dai dances are still being passed down, and some better-developed dances, such as Dai Peacock Dance, have also progressed, and many traditional dances have also declined.

The Dai Peacock Dance is a dance imitating the movement of a bird. There are many theories about the origin of the Dai Peacock Dance, but it is mainly related to myths and legends, religious beliefs, and ecological environment (Huang, 2021). More than a thousand years ago, there was a legend about the peacock dance among the Dai people. At present, the most recognized statement of Dai Peacock dance is as follows: The plumes of the peacock were formerly not so stunning and bright. During the "Pala" religious festival, Buddha descended to Earth to deliver sermon. The peacock wanted to pay homage to the Buddha but Buddha was surrounded by the crowd. However, Buddha spotted the peacock's unadulterated devotion and sent a ray of light which illuminating the peacock's tail with iridescent colours. The peacock then danced and performed in homage of Buddha, displaying its beautiful feathers. Hence, peacocks are revered by the Dai people as a symbol of luck, beauty and purity, and they watch this dance on special occasion. The Peacock Dance consists of a fixed order of choreography that mimic the movements of the peacock. These choreography include

gazing around the nest, wandering, looking for water, playing, drinking, spreading and shaking the wings, and displaying the tail feathers (Liu, 2020).

The trend of the times is constantly changing to cater to people's love but change and inheritance are always a controversial issue. By exploring the changing laws of peacock dance, combining many factors to analyze the reasons for this situation, and at the same time, analyze the works of each era. The inheritance of different levels of traditional dance forms, and then gain a deeper understanding of the Dai Peacock Dance, inspire the creative inspiration of the national folk dance.

Besides reviewing literatures regarding evolution and inheritance of traditional dances, literature review in relation with approaches or methods to maintain or preserve the traditional dances and traditional cultures were conducted. Several researchers claimed that social media is recognized as a contemporary approach to preserve cultural heritage as well as classical or traditional dances (Peng, 2021; Seetoo, 2020; Wang Tingting & Fu Lijie, 2019). Social media platform such as Tiktok (Douyin), YouTube and Facebook are good representatives for preserving the traditional dances. In China, most of the mobile phone users are using Tiktok (Douyin) during their leisure time. In agreement with the study of Zeng (2019), they believed the capability of social media such as Tiktok (Douyin) in introducing the traditional dances to the community as well as maintaining and preserving the dances.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Historical origin of Dai Peacock Dance**

The origin of the peacock and Dai Dance also stems from the spiritual beliefs of the Dai people. The Dai people's love and reverence for peacocks has a certain national totem worship nature, which affects Dai Dance. The peacock dance is called "Galuoyong" in the Dai people, which means peacock dancing (Lin Dongxu, 2019). In the totem mythology of the Dai nationality, there is a peacock with a human head and a bird body, which reproduces countless offspring after marriage. The ancestors of the Dai people believed that the peacock with a human head and bird body was related to the ancient clan of the Dai nationality. The original form of the peacock dance is derived from this. The prototype of the peacock dance that people wear with masks is also derived from the "human head peacock body" (Mikdar, 2021). Later, in ancient Buddhist murals, you can often see the image of the god bird with the head of the peacock. They sacrificed or performed in grand festivals. This is a faithful restoration of the origin of the peacock dance.

Another myth regarding existence of peacock dance is to tell the story of "Devil and the Peacock". Basically, the Devil wanted to seize peacock to be his wife. This is because the peacock is very beautiful with colourful feathers. However, the peacock is

able to escape because its feathers are very bright and shiny which distracted the Devil from catching it. The another fairy-tale was told that the Dai leader led total of four thousand people to find forever contentment. They reached a place where they saw dancing peacock and heard water flowing. The whole scene was very joyful and calm, claiming eternal happiness was found. With that, the villages imitated the water flowing sound and dancing movement of peacock to form peacock dance. It is obvious that the relationship between peacock dance, Dai people and Buddhism are closely related to each other (Wang Tingting & Fu Lijie, 2019).

### **Preserving the Artistic Heritage of The Chinese Dai Peacock Dance**

The effort to preserve the creative history of the Chinese Dai Peacock Dance is centred on preserving its originality, character, and cultural relevance. Traditional dance forms, such as the Dai Peacock Dance, function as stores of cultural memory and identity, encapsulating a community's history and beliefs through its movements, costumes, and tales (Wu et al., 2022). These dances are more than just performances; they are living examples of cultural customs passed down through generations.

Huang (2021), for example, emphasises the Dai Peacock Dance's beautiful movements, vivid costumes, and symbolic narrative as vital components that portray Dai culture and history as a whole. The exquisite choreography of the dance, paired with lavish costumes covered with peacock feathers, pays visual and emotional homage to the natural world and the Dai people's cultural beliefs.

However, at an era of fast globalisation and cultural uniformity, traditional art forms such as the Dai Peacock Dance face serious threats to their survival (Wang Tingting & Fu Lijie, 2019). The onslaught of industrialization, shifting social dynamics, and declining interest among younger generations all represent a serious threat to the survival of traditional cultural activities. Without conscious attempts to preserve and promote ancient dances such as the Dai Peacock Dance, we risk losing priceless cultural legacy.

Previous research has highlighted the importance of applying tactics that combine tradition and modernity to ensure the survival of traditional dance forms. Zeng (2019) research, for example, emphasises the relevance of education and community engagement in revitalising traditional dances in future generations. They suggest that by including traditional dance training into school curriculum and community programmes, young people can have a better understanding of their cultural history and serve as guardians of these traditions.

Furthermore, programmes that use technology to document, archive, and transmit traditional dances show potential for preserving cultural heritage. For example, digital archives and online platforms serve as accessible repositories where

individuals can access and learn about traditional dances such as the Dai Peacock Dance (Lin Dongxu, 2019). These digital tools not only help to preserve cultural heritage, but they also allow for wider transmission and enjoyment of traditional creative forms among worldwide audiences.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A quantitative approach, through pre-determined multiple-choice questions were used to collect data that is easy for respondents to answer (Bruhn Jensen, 2020). An empirical approach was used, employing a pre-test and post-test questionnaire survey to collect data on respondents' knowledge and perceptions before and after they view TikTok video about the Chinese Dai Peacock Dance. This survey included multiple-choice questions designed to assess changes in respondents' awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the dance. Primary data from the pre- and post-tests were analyzed using statistical methods to measure the effectiveness of the TikTok video in influencing participants' views.

This study employed the questionnaire as the main instrument for data collection. purpose of this instrument is to measure any changes in respondents' knowledge, awareness, and perceptions of the Chinese Dai Peacock Dance. The questionnaire will include four sections: Section A will gather demographic information, Section B will assess respondents' initial knowledge of the dance, Section C will measure their awareness of current trends in the dance's development, and Section D will evaluate the effectiveness of TikTok as a platform for promoting the dance.

This study has 300 participants, including 182 university students from China and 118 from Malaysia. Because the videos are in Chinese, Chinese university students found it easier to complete the questionnaire, and their participation rate were higher owing to their environment. Malaysian university students, largely of Malaysian Chinese heritage, were also attended. The study involved students from Yunnan University in China and Universiti Malaya (UM). Yunnan University (abbreviated as YNU) is a key university jointly established by the Ministry of Education of China and the People's Government of Yunnan Province.

The responses from the questionnaire survey were analysed by calculate their point and frequency using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) 27.0 software. The received data for the study was analysed using inferential statistics. Respondent's mean pre-test and post-test rating were calculated. The mean was used to measure the level of knowledge, awareness and the effectiveness of Tiktok platform promote the creation and choreography Dai Peacock Dance in China.

FINDINGS AND DISSCUSSION

The Effectiveness of Using Tiktok as A Platform for Preserving the Dai Peacock Dance

An independent sample t-test was used to analyze the data obtained from both the pre-test and post-test assessments. This statistical test was chosen to examine whether there are any significant differences in the responses of the participants before and after exposure to the TikTok content.

Table 1: Independent Sample T Test							
Variables	Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	df	Sig.
The knowledge of the dai peacock dance	Pre	300	2.07	0.83	-20.634	598	0.000
	Post	300	3.68	1.06			
Content creation of peacock dance on tiktok	Pre	300	2.43	1.10	-15.057	598	0.000
	Post	300	3.68	0.92			
The effectiveness of tiktok in educating about Dai peacock dance	Pre	300	2.51	1.14	-14.541	598	0.000
	Post	300	3.74	0.92			

\* Significant at P<0.05

The pre-test and post-test comparison shows a significant increase in participants' knowledge of the Dai Peacock Dance, with a substantial mean score improvement from 2.07 to 3.68. This change is statistically significant, as indicated by the t-value of -20.634 and the p-value of 0.000. This finding supports previous research by Ileana et al., (2019), who suggest that platforms like TikTok can effectively spread cultural knowledge to a wide audience. TikTok’s format, which allows for short, visually engaging content, is particularly effective in increasing awareness of cultural practices, as users are more likely to engage with easily digestible and entertaining content. Furthermore, Jebakumar (2020) argues that short-form videos are conducive to enhancing engagement, particularly with younger audiences, who are more likely to have limited prior knowledge of traditional cultural practices.

The significant improvement in participants' understanding of content creation, with the pre-test score of 2.43 rising to 3.68 in the post-test, suggests that exposure to TikTok content not only increased knowledge of the dance but also helped participants better understand the process of creating cultural content. The t-value of -15.057 and the p-value of 0.000 confirm that the difference is statistically significant. This result aligns with findings by Kaizuka dan Rukmana (2021), who highlight that social media platforms like TikTok enable users to engage in creating content related to cultural heritage. TikTok, with its user-friendly interface and vast potential for creativity,

allows both creators and viewers to explore and share cultural elements in innovative ways, thus promoting an interactive and participatory form of cultural preservation.

The most significant improvement in the post-test was in participants' perception of the effectiveness of TikTok in educating them about the Dai Peacock Dance, where the mean score increased from 2.51 to 3.74. The t-value of -14.541 and the p-value of 0.000 further emphasize the significance of this change, suggesting that TikTok was seen as an effective educational tool for the dance. This result is consistent with Kim et al., (2022), who argue that social media platforms can act as effective educational tools when utilized appropriately. Evans et al. point out that for social media platforms to truly educate, content needs to be both engaging and informative, and it is crucial that content creators offer deeper insights rather than relying solely on entertainment value. In this context, TikTok's ability to present the Dai Peacock Dance in an engaging yet informative manner supports its effectiveness as an educational platform.

The significant improvements across all measures further align with the works of Kurfi et al., (2021), who explore how digital media platforms have evolved into vital educational resources. Anderson and Rainie argue that platforms like TikTok, through their interactive and accessible content, provide an effective medium for both informal and formal learning, particularly for younger generations who are more familiar with digital technology. The results suggest that TikTok's format may be particularly effective in bridging the gap between entertainment and education, making cultural learning both enjoyable and impactful.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight the significant potential of TikTok as an effective platform for promoting cultural knowledge and preserving traditional practices, specifically the Dai Peacock Dance. The data reveals that exposure to TikTok content resulted in a marked increase in participants' knowledge and understanding of the dance, as well as their perceptions of content creation and the educational effectiveness of the platform. The substantial improvement in participants' knowledge of the Dai Peacock Dance, along with their enhanced understanding of content creation and the effectiveness of TikTok in educating and preserving cultural traditions, underscores the platform's ability to engage audiences and facilitate cultural learning.

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