

# Digital inheritance: Protection and Management of Hunan Kunqu opera in China

Bin Wang<sup>1</sup>, Sarana Photchanachan<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>School of Management, Shinawatra University, Thailand

E-mail: <sup>1</sup>sarana.p@siu.ac.th, <sup>2</sup>2350432884@qq.com

**Received** February 4, 2022; **Revised** August 13, 2022; **Accepted** August 16, 2022

## Abstract

Chinese opera has a long and varied history. It is not only an important part of Chinese excellent traditional culture and an important object for the protection of intangible cultural heritage but also occupies a unique and very important position in the world drama culture. The objectives of this study were to the resources of Hunan Kunqu Opera, to realize the digital manipulation of Hunan Kunqu Opera, to build the Hunan Kunqu Opera digital platform, and to explore ways to promote the Hunan Kunqu Opera digital platform. Each step was performed differently. In the early stages of the study, most of the literature reviews and field surveys were used in conjunction with qualitative research. In this process, it was to judge and identify valuable research objects and gather valuable information about the Hunan Kunqu Opera. In the middle of the study, the quantitative research method is mainly used, which is particularly prominent in the research stage of the Hunan Kunqu Opera digital protection system.

The results of this study showed that the Hunan Kunqu Opera's digital management was conducive to protecting Xiangkun's resources and the digital manipulation of Hunan Kunqu Opera was conducive to the wild spread of Hunan Kunqu Opera culture. Therefore, the digital management of Hunan Kunqu Opera was conducive to the creation of an all-round and multi-angle platform for the inherited resource audience.

**Keywords:** Digital inheritance; Hunan Kunqu opera; Protection and management

## Introduction

Chinese opera has a long history and many varieties. It is not only an important part of Chinese excellent traditional culture and an important object for the protection of intangible cultural heritage,

but also occupies a unique and very important position in the world drama culture (Deng Jianping, 2018). Among the hundreds of Chinese operas, Kunqu Opera is a kind of opera with a long history and profound cultural background, as well as high artistic quality and cultural value. Kunqu Opera, formerly known as "Kunshan Tune" or "Kun Tune", is an ancient Chinese opera with vocal tune and also called Kunju Opera. Kunqu Opera is one of the oldest operas in the traditional operas of the Han ethnicity. It is also a treasure of the traditional culture and art of the Han ethnicity, especially a valuable treasure of the opera art. It is called an "orchid" in the Chinese operas garden with hundreds of operas (Zhou Guanglei, 2018).

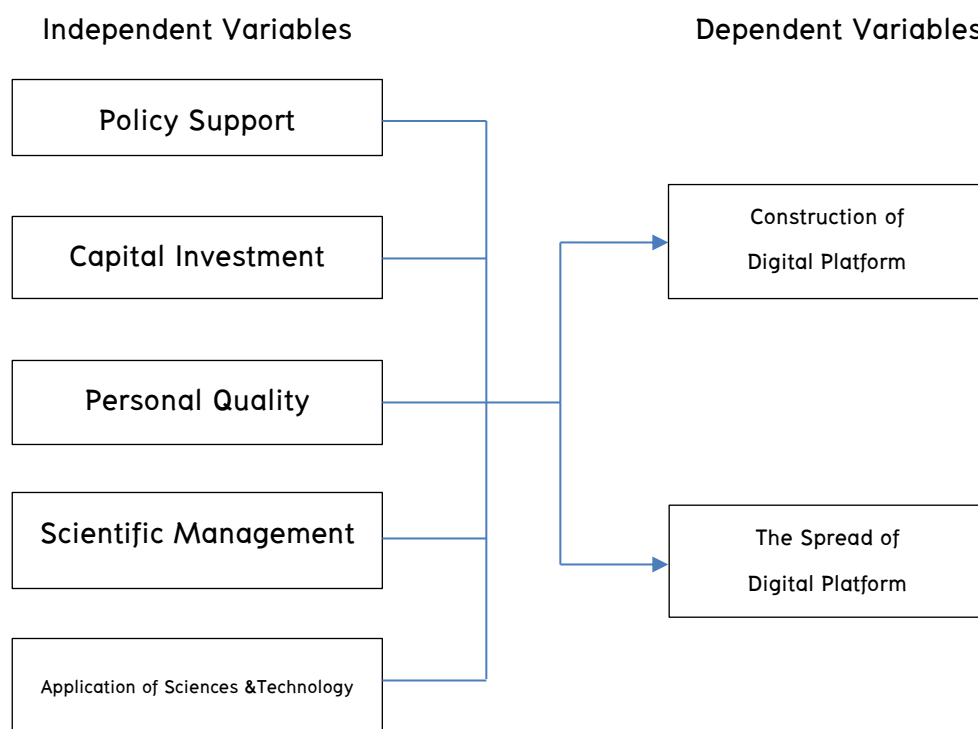
Kunqu Opera originated from more than 600 years ago and was originally created by Gu Jiancao, a Kunshan native. During the Jiajing period of the Ming Dynasty, Wei Liangfu, an outstanding Kunqu musician and reformer, boldly reformed Kunshan Tune and formed new tune by absorbing the characteristics of Yuyao Tune, Yiyang Tune and Haiyan Tune, which became popular then (Zhai Leilei, 2016). Because this tone was so soft and delicate as glutinous rice ball made of glutinous rice flour eaten by the people living in the regions south of the Yangtze River, it earned an interesting name of called "Shuimo Tune", which was later called Kunqu Opera (Xiong Hongyun, 2016). With the care and support of all sectors of society, Kunqu Opera was listed as "Representative Works of Human Oral and Intangible Heritage" by UNESCO in 2001 and gained worldwide fame and spread throughout the world (Yang Jie, 2017).

## Research Objectives

The research objectives of this paper mainly include resource construction, digital communication, the establishment of inheritor resource audience omni-directional, multi angle platform. So, the objectives of this research are

1. To study the resources of Hunan Kunqu Opera.
2. To find out realize Hunan Kunqu Opera digital management and build Hunan Kunqu Opera digital platform.
3. To investigate how to promote Hunan Kunqu Opera digital platform

## Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1** Conceptual Framework developed from original research

In this study, the digital management of Hunan Kunqu Opera is taken as the research object, and the method of qualitative and quantitative research is used. Based on the analysis and explanation of the research design and related data of the qualitative research part, the relevant contents are extracted for quantitative research, and the quantitative research design and corresponding data are analyzed to refine the argumentation basis and influencing factors of the digital management of Hunan Kunqu Opera, and then the digital management platform of Hunan Kunqu Opera is constructed by using digital technology (Wu Yuanyuan, 2016).

In this paper, a number of research methods are used, and there are different focuses in different research stages. In the early stage of the study, it mainly adopts the methods of literature research and field investigation combined with qualitative research. The main task of this stage is to judge and identify valuable research objects and collect valuable information of Hunan Kunqu Opera; In the middle of the study, the quantitative research method is mainly used, which is particularly prominent in the research stage of Hunan Kunqu Opera digital protection system (Zhang Xiaoyu, 2016).

## Research Findings and Discussion

Combined with literature research and field interviews, it analyzes the current situation of Hunan Kunqu Opera digital management on the basis of statistical data. The main content includes three parts, the first part is the resource construction of Hunan Kunqu Opera digital management, the second part is the qualitative and quantitative research data analysis of Hunan Kunqu Opera digital management. The third part is on the basis of data statistics and analysis, to discuss the construction and dissemination of Hunan Kunqu Opera database (Liu Xiaohui, 2017).

Hunan Kunqu Opera digital platform has gone far beyond the scope of local Hunan Kunqu Opera culture in time and space, and has developed to the Internet and society in depth. This digital platform resources construction is mainly divided into history, performance, model, performance information, interaction, cultural and creative promotion, cooperation institutions and other parts, forming a three-dimensional development track of digitization, digitization, appreciation, theorization, skill and interaction (Shen Weili, Zhang Kechun, 2017). These contents further enrich the cultural connotation of Hunan Kunqu Opera, and lay a special theoretical foundation for the construction and application of digital resources of Kunqu Opera.

## Data analysis

Focusing on the five aspects of basic information, government assistance, the internal situation of Kun Opera Troupe, the scientific management of Kun Opera Troupe and the use of digital means, the author uses semi-structured interviews to interview 15 members of Kun Opera Troupe in Hunan Province.

From the perspective of government assistance, there are the following two situations. Among the interviewees, managers know more about government policies than non managers, and younger young people know more about government policies than older members (Gong Longyu, 2016). In addition, although the government has issued the corresponding documents, and through the interview content, it is not difficult to find that the government's special fund investment is narrow and not strong enough, and it is mainly concentrated in the application of scientific research projects, most members do not understand, which indicates that the government needs to increase its support for Kun Opera Troupe.

From the internal situation of the troupe, as far as the salary is concerned, the satisfaction of the whole staff is still relatively high, and most of them are satisfied with the improvement of welfare measures such as the establishment, five insurances and one fund; National inheritors and provincial

inheritors are entitled to corresponding subsidies (Wang Kexiang, 2018).; A small number of personnel will also have income beyond the basic salary, and the capital income mainly comes from business performance, teaching, etc.

From the scientific management of Kun Opera Troupe, the management mainly focuses on the attendance rate of actors, performance, personnel training, etc. Of course, in addition, Hunan Kunqu Opera Troupe has relatively sound administrative departments, financial management departments and other functional departments. In addition, with the development of the times, the management, training and further education of Kun Opera Troupe have become more scientific and rigorous. It has a more comprehensive management method. For example, it has set certain goals for the plays that need to be staged and rehearsed every year, aiming at strengthening the daily training management and providing better and more perfect stage presentation (On Guoxin, Zhang Lilong,(2019).

From the perspective of the use of digital means, the older generation of artists basically do not know much about the current high and new technology, and the younger generation always stay in the use of digital means such as video and audio, and their understanding of digital is not thorough. It can be seen that the use of digital means needs to be popularized and deepened (Fan Qiaozhen, 2017).

## **Conclusion and Implication**

Based on the research and analysis of Hunan Kunqu Opera resource protection, cultural communication and digital platform, this chapter mainly puts forward the optimization strategy and implementation path of Hunan Kunqu Opera digital resource management. At the same time, the author summarizes the research value, significance, contribution and innovation of this paper, and points out the limitations and shortcomings of this research. Finally, the future research direction and practical suggestions are put forward for the follow-up research of Xiangkun digital resource management.

## **Research Conclusion**

1. Hunan Kunqu Opera digital management is conducive to the protection of Xiangkun resources

Through this study, we can see that the overall effect of digital management in Hunan Kunqu Opera (independent variables), respectively, the comprehensive influence of these five independent variables. When the stakeholders reach a higher degree of communication and construction of Hunan Kunqu Opera digital platform (dependent variable), the better the effect of Hunan Kunqu Opera Digital

Resource Management (dependent variable), the better the protection of Hunan Kunqu Opera resources, and vice versa.

Therefore, in the practice of digital resource management in Hunan Kunqu Opera, it is necessary to formulate and improve policies and regulations on the protection and inheritance of local intangible cultural heritage according to the actual situation of various regions, increase financial investment in the management of intangible cultural heritage resources in Hunan Kunqu Opera, strengthen the construction of resource management related systems, pay attention to the cultivation and introduction of resource management professionals, and attach importance to the innovation and development of traditional Hunan Kunqu Opera. On this basis, we should strengthen the digital construction of Hunan Kunqu Opera resource management (Fan Yun, 2017). Finally, by regularly investigating the evaluation feedback of Hunan Kunqu Opera stakeholders on the effect of resource management, we can actively adjust and improve the optimization strategy of its digital resource management.

2. Digital management of Hunan Kunqu Opera is conducive to the wide spread of Hunan Kunqu Opera culture

There is no successful experience and management mode that can be directly used for reference. Under the background of the information age, on the basis of comprehensive consideration of the influencing factors of Hunan Kunqu Opera resource management, we should keep pace with the times and apply digital technology to assist Hunan Kunqu Opera resource management, which is conducive to the spread of traditional Hunan Kunqu Opera culture to the greatest extent.

For Hunan Kunqu Opera resource management, all government departments in Hunan need to pay attention to the digital transformation of resource management, and actively build a digital, network and information platform for the protection and inheritance of Hunan Kunqu Opera intangible cultural heritage, so as to effectively connect Hunan Kunqu Opera intangible cultural heritage management departments with other resource management departments such as local culture, education, tourism, performing arts and ethnic cultural industries. So as to realize the sharing of network digital resources and complementary information among different departments, and ultimately achieve the goal of creating a modern digital development environment of Hunan Kunqu Opera, promoting the scientific optimization of its resource management, eliminating the crisis of local intangible cultural heritage, and achieving the purpose of wide spread of Hunan Kunqu Opera culture to the maximum extent.

3. Digital management of Hunan Kunqu Opera is conducive to the construction of an all-round and multi angle platform of inheritor--resource--audience

Hunan Kunqu Opera digital platform, supported by information technology and Internet platform, uses web.2.0 information technology to build and manage the background database, digitizes the text, picture, video, animation, inheritor data and other rich resources about Hunan Kunqu Opera, and adds the system design to the platform content, so as to integrate the Hunan Kunqu Opera related digital resources. It constructs a diversified digital platform of Hunan Kunqu Opera, which integrates cognition, interaction and entertainment.

Based on the Internet information technology, the platform is designed and developed by using digital technology and combining with the characteristics of Hunan Kunqu Opera culture, so as to test the research on Hunan Kunqu Opera digital management in this paper. In a word, it is important to sort out and integrate the relevant resource data of Hunan Kunqu Opera. For example, the resource platform includes information of Hunan Kunqu Opera, performance information of Hunan Kunqu Opera, knowledge popularization of Hunan Kunqu Opera, audio and video resources of Hunan Kunqu Opera and other knowledge, so as to solve and improve the current situation of scattered its resources, and effectively integrate the data resources of it. So that different audiences can get the resources they want on this platform.

## **Research contribution**

### **1. Contribution to knowledge**

This paper comprehensively expounds and combs the history, representative plays, inheritors and related knowledge of Hunan Kunqu Opera, which is helpful to promote Chinese excellent traditional music culture to domestic and foreign academic circles, and facilitate researchers to deeply understand the concept connotation, historical development, genre types, artistic characteristics, social influence and other knowledge and culture of Hunan Kunqu Opera.

### **2. Contribution to practice**

The research results of this paper have a certain value for the concept innovation of Hunan Kunqu Opera digital resource management, which will effectively promote the multi integration of representative repertoire, inheritor, clothing, image, spectrum and other resources. It will be beneficial to the protection, inheritance and optimal management of national music cultural resources, which can better effectively realize the information sharing of Hunan Kunqu Opera resources, promote the digital development of its resource management, improve the effect of Hunan Kunqu Opera resource management, and promote the better protection, inheritance and comprehensive development of traditional Hunan Kunqu Opera culture. The results of this study can also be used for reference to the

innovative protection and inheritance design of other national cultures. It can effectively realize the sharing of national culture and art resources, promote the understanding, appreciation, learning, exchange and dissemination of local culture, and save a lot of manpower, material resources and financial management costs of the government and enterprise departments. Can make the local excellent national culture get better protection, inheritance and development.

### 3. Some Useful Suggestions on Digital Management of Hunan Kunqu Opera are Put Forward

In the process of field investigation and interview on the digital protection and management of Hunan Kunqu Opera, it is known that there are still many problems to be solved in all aspects of digital protection of Kunqu Opera. According to expert interviews and the experience of digital protection of other types of intangible cultural heritage, this paper makes the following suggestions: (1) Establish the standard basis of digital management of Hunan Kunqu Opera. In recent years, China has issued the relevant policy documents of intangible cultural heritage protection, but in these policy documents, the digital protection mode is not taken as an important way to protect intangible cultural heritage, so as to make a guiding overall planning and deployment. Therefore, the importance of digital protection of intangible cultural heritage should be clarified through the legal effect, and make strategic deployment for the development and construction of intangible cultural heritage digital protection. Second, establish a unified, standardized and feasible standard for the digital management of Hunan Kunqu Opera. Only in this way can the digital management of traditional Chinese opera be used for reference. (2) Establish the digital management mechanism of Hunan Kunqu Opera. The digital management of Kunqu Opera should pay attention to the establishment and improvement of management system, realize the unification of standardization and promotion of digital construction, and standardize the digital construction according to the system, so as to promote the orderly progress of digital management. First of all, it is necessary to establish relevant digital management research institutions. The digital management work of Hunan Kunqu Opera should be carried out by the cooperation and complementarity of Hunan Kunqu Opera training institutions and digital research institutions. Secondly, the government departments should guide, co-ordinate and supervise the digital management of Hunan Kunqu Opera, and supervise the division of responsibilities of various departments to ensure the standardization and orderly implementation of digital management. (3) Strengthen the intelligence support of digital management in Hunan Kunqu Opera. Training of digital management professionals in Hunan Kunqu Opera. The digital management of Hunan Kunqu Opera needs talents who know both Hunan Kunqu Opera and digital technology. Therefore, it is necessary to cultivate a group of talents who combine theoretical knowledge with practical experience to support the construction of digital



management in Hunan Kunqu Opera. To build the digital management research platform of Hunan Kunming. In combination with universities and scientific research institutions, a research platform for digital management of Hunan Kunqu Opera should be set up. At the same time, it is also one of the protection means to actively apply for the digital project of Hunan KunquOpera. Finally, strengthen the exchange and cooperation of digital management of intangible cultural heritage of Chinese traditional opera. Through regular exchanges, all localities can summarize the achievements and explore the experience, and jointly promote the development of digital management of intangible cultural heritage of Chinese opera.(4) Guide social funds to participate in the construction of digitalmanagement in Hunan Kunqu Opera. It is necessary to broaden the sources of funds for digital construction in Hunan Kunqu Opera. We should encourage and support enterprises, institutions, social organizations and individuals to participate in the digital construction of Hunan Kunqu Opera by means of donation or setting up special funds.

## Reference

- Deng Jianping. (2018). Theoretical Conception Of Digital Protection Of Xi'an Gaoqiang In Quzhou. *Northern Music*, 38(20), 91–96.
- Fan Qiaozhen. (2017).Preliminary Study On Digital Protection Of Guangxi MusicIntangible Cultural Heritage. *Art Technology*, 30(9), 31.
- Fan Yun. (2017).Research On Digital Protection And Inheritance Of Shadow Play InSouthern Anhui. *Computer Knowledge And Technology*, 13(13), 179–181.
- Gong Longyu. (2016).Analysis Of Digital Protection And Inheritance Of MiaoEmbroidery In Western Hunan. *Drama House*, 20, 152–154.
- Liu Xiaohui. (2017). Summary And Analysis Of Research On Digital Protection OfChinese Traditional Folk Art. *Art Education Research*, 8, 28–29.
- On Guoxin, Zhang Lilong. (2019).On Digital Protection And Inheritance Of Intangible Cultural Heritage. *Library*, 4, 79–84.
- Shen Weili, Zhang Kechun. (2017). Research On Digital Protection Of Ancient Buildings Based On BIM Technology. *Sichuan Building Materials*, 43(12), 63–64.
- Wang Kexiang. (2018). Research On Digital Protection And Inheritance Of NanjingGold Foil Forging Technology. *Creativity And Design*, 5,63–70.
- Wu Yuanyuan. (2016). Research On Inheritance Mode Of Huizhou Folk Song Inheritors From The Perspective Of Digital Protection. *Art Review*, 11, 39–41.

- Xiong Hongyun. (2016). Digital Protection And Inheritance Of Clothing Patterns. *Textile Science Research*, 1, 92–94.
- Yang Jie. (2017). Digital Protection And Promotion Of Hainan Lijin Art. *Journal Of Hainan Tropical Ocean University*, 24(3), 32–36.
- Zhai Leilei. (2016). Digital Protection And Inheritance Of Shaanxi Intangible Cultural Heritage In The Context Of New Media. *Talent*, 17, 232–233.
- Zhang Xiaoyu. (2016). Research Review On Digital Protection Of Intangible Cultural Heritage In China. *Inner Mongolia Science And Technology And Economy*, 12, 6–9.
- Zhou Guanglei. (2018). Digital Protection: A New Way Of Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection. *Comparative Study On Cultural Innovation*, 2(20), 146–147.