

MEASURES TO STIMULATE INTEREST AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN QUAN HO BAC NINH FOLK SONGS IN THE DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY ERA

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Abstract: Quan ho Bac Ninh folk songs are a distinctive intangible cultural heritage, embodying profound humanistic values, aesthetic principles, and codes of conduct of the Kinh Bac - Bac Ninh region. However, amid rapid digitalization and the expansion of modern entertainment, high school students' interest and engagement in Quan ho has gradually declined. This paper aims to analyze the current state of awareness, attitudes, and interest of high school students toward Quan ho folk songs, and to propose measures to stimulate their interest and engagement in the digital era. The findings indicate that experiential, interactive, and technology-integrated approaches lead to noticeable positive changes in students' attitudes and behaviors toward Quan ho, thereby improving the effectiveness of traditional cultural education within schools.

Keywords: measures, interest, high school students, folk songs, Quan ho Bac Ninh.

1. INTRODUCTION

Bac Ninh is a region rich in cultural and historical heritage. It is home to more than 1,450 ranked historical relics, eight UNESCO-recognized cultural heritages, and thousands of traditional festivals, craft villages, and valuable customs. Among these, Quan ho folk songs were inscribed by UNESCO as a Representative Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on September 30, 2009. Over the past decade, Bac Ninh Province has implemented various preservation and promotion initiatives; however, interest among young people - particularly high school students - remains limited, even among those raised in the Kinh Bac region. Many students exhibit indifference, a lack of interest, and even vague or inaccurate perceptions of this distinctive folk music genre.

Recent successes of music products and artistic programs that incorporate folk elements through modern forms suggest a different trend. With the participation of young artists, these productions demonstrate that young audiences are not rejecting tradition. Instead, they tend to prefer innovative, accessible, and digitally compatible expressions of traditional culture. This provides a practical foundation for researching heritage education models that integrate traditional values with modern approaches.

In the context of digital transformation, high school students are regarded as "digital citizens" with strong capacities for technological access, content creation, and multimedia communication. When appropriately guided, students can become active contributors to the preservation and dissemination of Quan ho folk songs. Accordingly, this study examines the current situation and proposes heritage education measures to stimulate high school students' interest in Bac Ninh Quan ho folk songs in the digital era.

2. RESEARCH RESULTS

2.1. Current state of awareness and interest among high school students toward Quan ho folk song heritage

The study employed multiple scientific methods, including literature review, surveys, statistical analysis, in-depth interviews, and field-based experiential observation. Data were collected from students at five high schools in Bac Ninh City, alongside interviews with Quan ho artists, teachers, and students. The survey results show that the majority of high school students demonstrate a low level of interest in Quan ho folk songs.

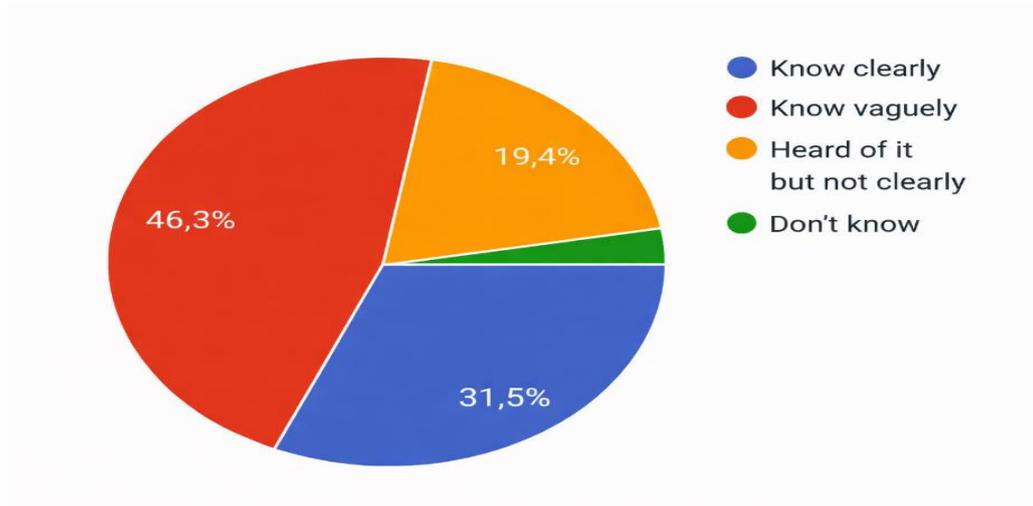


Figure 1. Students' level of understanding of Bac Ninh Quan ho folk songs

(Source: Author's survey results, 2025)

The findings indicate that students' awareness of Quan ho remains limited: only 31.5% of students reported having a clear understanding, while 68.5% had merely heard of it or possessed superficial knowledge. Many perceive Quan ho as "unsuitable for young people," describing its rhythm as slow, its lyrics as archaic and difficult to understand, and melodies as less attractive than modern music genres. The proportion of students capable of singing or accurately identifying Quan ho melodies is very low. Knowledge of its history, artistic characteristics, and cultural practices was limited, with some students confusing Quan ho with other folk music forms.

Although Quan ho folk songs have been incorporated into the school curriculum and extracurricular activities, their implementation remains largely one-way, with limited interaction and insufficient alignment with students' psychological characteristics and reception habits in the digital age.

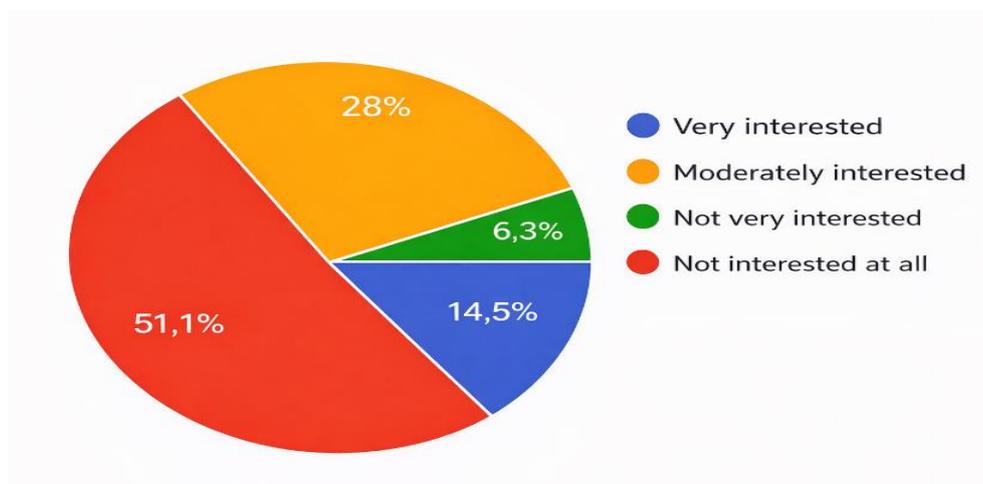


Figure 2. Students' level of interest in learning about Quan ho folk songs

(Source: Author's survey results, 2025)

Figure 2 indicates that students' interest in learning about Quan ho is mainly moderate (51.1%), while the proportion of highly interested students remains low (14.5%), and 34.3% report little or no interest. The gap between awareness and interest suggests that "knowing" is not sufficient to "appreciate" without experiential and emotional engagement. The main reasons identified include perceptions that Quan ho is not appealing to young people (57.4%), limited opportunities for practice and experiential learning (36.7%), and peer influence (36.6%).

The dominance of digital environments and modern entertainment platforms further widens the gap between students and traditional music. Nevertheless, most students still acknowledge the cultural value of Quan ho folk songs and express willingness to engage if the activities are organized in more appealing ways.

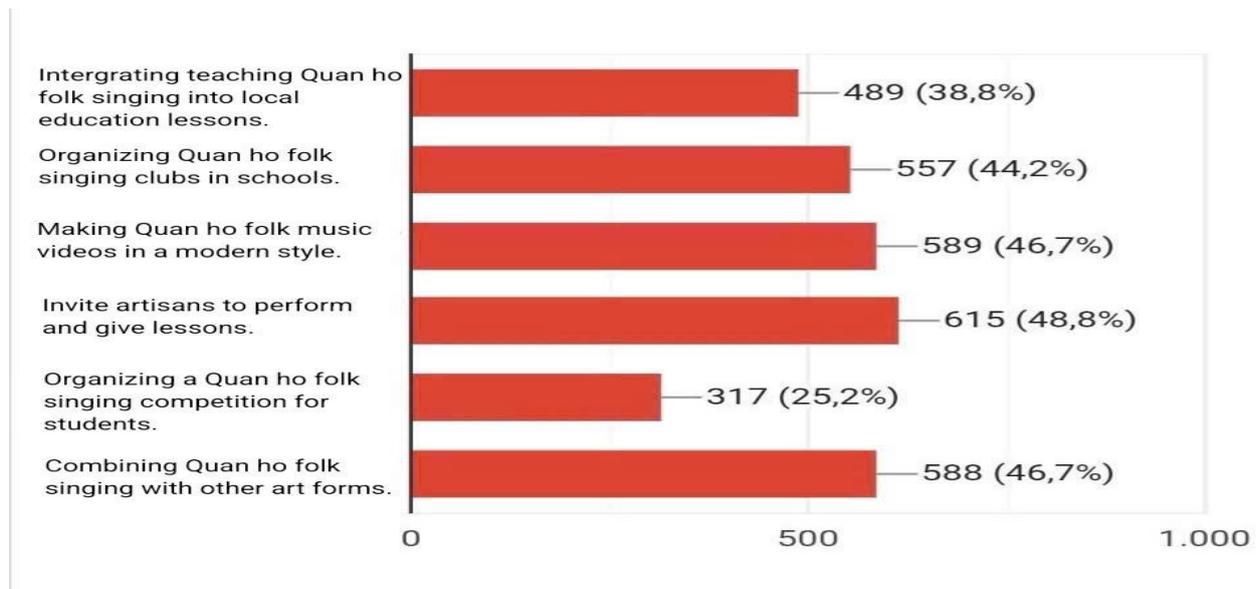


Figure 3. Measures to enhance students' interest in Quan ho folk songs

(Source: Author's survey results, 2025)

Figure 3 highlights students' demand for experiential and modernized approaches to Quan ho, particularly direct instruction by artisans (48.8%), producing Quan ho-themed videos in modern styles and interdisciplinary integration (46.7%), and establishing Quan ho clubs in schools (44.2%).

Overall, high school students remain relatively indifferent toward Quan ho folk song heritage. This is largely attributed to perceptions of Quan ho as slow, melancholic, archaic, and unsuitable for young audiences. Although Quan ho has been integrated into school activities for many years, these efforts often rely on traditional formats, lack interaction, and fail to create strong appeal. Connections with artisans, cultural institutions, and digital technology applications remain limited. However, many students maintain positive perceptions of Quan ho's cultural value when it is presented in more suitable ways.

2.2. Experimental measures: The "traditional - modern touchpoint" model to stimulate high school students' interest in Bac Ninh Quan ho folk songs in the digital era

Drawing on John Dewey's concept of "touchpoints" in experiential education - defined as moments or activities that enable direct and emotional engagement with knowledge, thereby shaping positive awareness, attitudes, and behaviors (Dewey, 1938) - this study applies the concept to cultural heritage education. A "traditional - modern touchpoint" refers to learning experiences that integrate core traditional values with modern approaches aligned with students' psychological, cognitive, and behavioral characteristics in the digital era.

In the context of Quan ho folk songs, traditional elements include classical melodies, lyrics, bonding customs, costumes, and the behavioral norms of "lien anh" and "lien chi". Modern elements are reflected in educational organization methods, such as cultural reenactment combined with cultural hybridity, as well as the use of digital technology and multimedia communication in creative activities.

From a developmental psychology perspective, high school students - particularly Generation Z - tend to prefer visual, interactive, and experience-based learning over text-based instruction (Tran Thi Minh Duc, 2014). Accordingly, enhancing multimedia, interactive, and experiential approaches enables students to engage with cultural heritage in a more natural and sustainable manner.

2.2.1. Measure 1: Re-presenting the core values of Quan ho folk songs

Experimental activities focused on recreating Quan ho cultural spaces within schools through clubs and experiential - career orientation programs. Students learned to sing Quan ho, explored its customs, costumes, and social conduct, and developed new performance forms for school art activities, including modern arrangements, mashups, and instrumental interpretations of Quan ho melodies. These programs were designed to progress from traditional to modern elements, creating a continuous emotional experience. Observations revealed clear shifts in students' attitudes - from curiosity to interest and pride - with many students recording and sharing performances on social media, thereby supporting heritage dissemination.

In addition, visits to traditional festivals, historical sites, and Quan ho theaters enhanced students' understanding of the cultural context and social significance of the heritage.

2.2.2. Measure 2: Applying digital technology and multimedia communication in heritage education

Digital technology was integrated into both formal and extracurricular activities as part of the ongoing educational digital transformation (Ministry of Education and Training, 2018). Learning was conducted through videos, digital archives, educational games, role-playing, and project-based activities. Students were encouraged to produce media outputs such as videos, infographics, and digital posters, shifting from passive learners to active creators and disseminators of heritage content.

The "Borderless Classroom" model further extended learning by connecting students with international peers through online platforms. In this model, students introduced Quan ho folk songs in English, enhancing intercultural communication skills and reinforcing their role as young "cultural ambassadors."

Overall, the experimental results indicate that the "traditional - modern touchpoint" model generates positive educational and scientific outcomes. It supports pedagogical innovation, improves the effectiveness of local education programs, and fosters a school-based cultural environment connected to Quan ho heritage. Moreover, the findings provide empirical evidence that targeted cognitive and emotional engagement can positively influence high school students' attitudes and behaviors toward cultural heritage, while offering a transferable methodological framework for intangible heritage education in other contexts.

3. CONCLUSION

In the context of rapid development in modern music and digital technology, the preservation and promotion of Quan ho Bac Ninh folk songs require educational approaches aligned with the psychological and behavioral characteristics of younger generations. The "traditional - modern touchpoint" model demonstrates effective connections between cultural heritage and digital experiences, enabling high school students to engage with Quan ho in a more accessible, proactive, and sustainable manner. As a result, Quan ho folk songs are not preserved as a legacy of the past but are revitalized within the cultural life of today's youth.

Digital technology serves as a supportive tool that enhances student engagement and heritage dissemination behaviors. However, the study also emphasizes that the integration of tradition and modernity must be carefully guided to preserve the core values of Quan ho folk songs and avoid oversimplification or commercialization. This requires close collaboration among schools, artisans, and researchers in implementing heritage education. Overall, the "traditional - modern touchpoint" model represents a viable approach that enhances the effectiveness of Quan ho heritage education in the context of digital transformation and offers implications for heritage education in general education systems.

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