

Importance and Feasibility of Teaching Cantonese Opera Culture in Singapore

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Abstract: As Singapore increasingly values diverse cultural expressions, there is growing recognition of the cultural significance and social impact of Cantonese opera. In the current context, there is a trend towards exploring the feasibility and significance of integrating Cantonese opera into international Chinese education in Singapore. This initiative aims to delve into the cultural significance of Cantonese opera as an iconic art form with substantial social influence, emphasizing the unique emotional connection Singaporeans have with it, and the imperative for China to encourage cultural communication. The feasibility section underscores that teaching Cantonese opera in Singapore is supported by strong governmental backing, ample educational resources, and keen interest among Singaporean students.

Keywords: Cantonese Opera; Singapore; Importance; Feasibility.

1. Introduction

In recent years, spurred by China's rapid socio-economic development and growing global influence, international Chinese education has experienced remarkable expansion. Beyond language proficiency, there's now a recognized need to comprehend Chinese culture and society, driving the evolution of international Chinese education.

The Center for Language Education and Cooperation (CLEC) has responded to this need by introducing the 'Reference Framework for Teaching Chinese Culture and National Conditions in International Chinese Education.' This framework, tailored for university and adult learners, outlines objectives such as understanding and appreciating the performance styles and representative works of Chinese regional operas.

Among these, Cantonese opera, or Guangdong opera, holds a prominent status. It was the second Chinese opera genre to be included on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity [1]. With significant social significance and global influence, Cantonese opera has spread widely among Cantonese diaspora communities across Southeast Asia, North America, and Oceania. Singapore stands out as the "second homeland" of Cantonese opera, where it has been nurtured and celebrated for over a century. Over time, Cantonese opera has transcended its origins within Cantonese-speaking communities, becoming a cultural bridge across diverse ethnic groups in Southeast Asia [2]. This evolution reflects its journey from a niche interest to a mainstream cultural phenomenon in the region.

However, given the historical context and challenges faced by Singapore in fostering a national identity while managing cultural diversity, the proposition of utilizing Cantonese opera in international Chinese education is intriguing. The government's efforts in Singapore's early nation-building phase aimed to create a cohesive national identity amidst diverse ethnicities [3], which sometimes led to suppression or neglect of specific cultural identities, including traditional Chinese cultural forms like Cantonese opera.

Today, younger generations in Singapore and Southeast Asia may feel disconnected from traditional Chinese cultural

practices due to societal changes and modernization. Integrating Cantonese opera into educational frameworks could potentially bridge this gap, fostering deeper understanding, acceptance, and identification with Chinese cultural heritage among youth.

Now there is a paucity of scholarly research in this specific area, analyzing the feasibility and impact of incorporating Cantonese opera into international Chinese education could yield valuable insights. It could elucidate how cultural forms can be revitalized and integrated into educational contexts to enrich cultural awareness and identity formation among younger generations.

Such research could also stimulate academic interest and scholarly attention, advocating for the inclusion of diverse cultural elements within broader educational frameworks. This approach not only preserves cultural heritage but also enhances cross-cultural understanding and appreciation in a globalized world.

2. Cantonese Opera Evolution and Revitalization in Singapore

Singapore's journey to nationhood has been marked by a tumultuous history, shaped by phases including British and Japanese colonialism throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, a brief return to British rule after World War II, gradual steps towards self-governance, merger with the Federation of Malaya upon its departure from British colonialism, and finally, independence from Malaysia in 1965, ushering in a sustained period of development.

Amidst global upheaval and complex political landscapes, Singapore's official cultural and political attitudes towards China have evolved through distinct historical stages, significantly influencing the trajectory of Cantonese Opera within the city-state. Broadly speaking, its development can be delineated into six key stages: initial transplantation and establishment, periods of prosperity, temporary stagnation, subsequent revival, decline, and eventual revitalization.

2.1. Initial Transplantation and Establishment

During the early 19th century, as colonies in the South Seas sought large numbers of affordable laborers, waves of

Chinese migrants from Guangdong and Fujian introduced local Chinese operatic forms, including Cantonese Opera, to Southeast Asia, including Singapore. Locally known as "Wayang," referring to traditional theatrical performances often held outdoors, these operas initially served ceremonial and entertainment purposes, mirroring practices from China [4].

As early as 1842, Cantonese operas were staged in Singapore for festivals, rituals, and divine worship, with their artistic and cultural functions transplanted directly from China. The establishment of Lei Yuen Tong in 1857 marked a pivotal moment, indicating formal organization and heightened activity of Cantonese Opera in Singapore [5].

2.2. Periods of Prosperity

During the 1920s, Cantonese opera in Singapore experienced a renaissance fostered by the British colonial administration's relatively liberal cultural policies and the strong nostalgia among the local Cantonese Chinese community for their homeland. This era saw a flourishing of Cantonese opera performances by professional troupes across various venues.

Initially, performances were dedicated to ceremonial rituals during gods' birthdays and folk festivals, reflecting their traditional roots. As demand grew, opera houses emerged where paid performances attracted Chinese audiences eager to watch their beloved operas. Additionally, opera performances became fixtures in venues like casinos and assembly halls.

2.3. Temporary Stagnation

Before the Pacific War, amateur troupes emerged, prioritizing artistic purity and community service. Their influence surpassed that of professional troupes, significantly contributing to the preservation and evolution of Chinese opera in Singapore.

During the Anti-Japanese War, Singaporean Chinese organized large-scale charity performances to support disaster relief and national causes, transforming Cantonese opera from mere entertainment to a form of social activism. The Japanese occupation disrupted these activities: amateur troupes disbanded, and professional troupes were coerced into performing apolitical plays under Japanese scrutiny. This period underscores Cantonese opera's evolution in Singapore—from cultural entertainment to a vehicle for community solidarity and resilience in the face of adversity [6].

2.4. Subsequent Revival and Decline

After World War II, Singapore witnessed a revival of amateur opera troupes and a restructuring of commercial theater, which revitalized Cantonese opera and other Chinese operas in the region. However, political dynamics shifted significantly following the founding of the People's Republic of China, leading Singapore to distance itself intentionally from China. This geopolitical tension, combined with rising nationalism and debates within Malay-Chinese literary circles about cultural identity, influenced the development of Cantonese opera locally.

Singapore's post-independence policies in the 1960s, which favored English as the official language and sought to unify a diverse population, posed challenges to traditional local operas like Cantonese opera. Cultural and economic policies, as well as urbanization trends, further contributed to the

decline of these art forms, which were seen as conflicting with the nation-state's emphasis on unity and modernization.

Despite these challenges, the popularity of Chinese opera was bolstered by well-produced Chinese opera films starting from the late 1970s. These films played a crucial role in maintaining interest and acceptance of opera within Singaporean society, even as local live performances faced decline.

2.5. Revitalization

In response to concerns over excessive Westernization of culture, particularly since the late 1970s, the Singaporean government-initiated efforts to rejuvenate Chinese cultural traditions. This marked a shift towards reevaluating and supporting local Chinese arts, including Cantonese opera, amidst a backdrop of evolving cultural policies and societal changes.

To advance these objectives, Singapore has emphasized preserving the cultural identities of all ethnic groups and promoting multiculturalism through substantial financial support for opera arts like Cantonese Opera. Deng Xiaoping's historic visit to Singapore in 1978 marked a watershed moment, significantly advancing the political relationship between the two nations and revitalizing their official engagement in opera arts after a prolonged period of stagnation spanning over two decades. Since the 1980s, Singapore's opera scene has evolved significantly beyond its initial transplantation phase, demonstrating remarkable vitality. Institutions such as the Academy of Theatre Arts, the Centre for Traditional Arts, and the Dunhuang Theatre Workshop play pivotal roles in opera performance, education, and cultural preservation, integrating opera into daily life. They continue to produce both transplanted and original repertoires, nurturing a steady stream of young opera enthusiasts and performers [7]. As a result, contemporary Cantonese Opera in Singapore has transcended previous challenges, presenting an increasingly vibrant and prosperous cultural landscape.

In conclusion, Singapore's Cantonese opera journey reflects a complex interplay of historical events, geopolitical shifts, and cultural policies. From post-war revival to decline under English-centric governance and urbanization pressures, the art form faced significant challenges. However, recent governmental cultural initiatives signify a renewed effort to embrace rich Chinese cultural heritage.

3. Importance of Teaching Cantonese Opera in Singapore

Cantonese opera possesses significant artistic merit and social stature, making it imperative for its dissemination abroad as a quintessential symbol of traditional Chinese culture. Beyond its unique artistic expression, Cantonese opera encompasses profound historical and cultural narratives, endowing it with an irreplaceable advantage for global outreach. Singapore, often hailed as the "second homeland of Cantonese opera," harbors a robust demand among overseas Cantonese Chinese for learning and appreciating its cultural essence. This cultural milieu provides fertile ground for the communication of Cantonese opera within Singapore and offers abundant cultural resources for foreign language education. Furthermore, in today's globalized era, promoting Chinese culture on a global scale is an imperative task. By imparting Cantonese opera culture, educators can effectively

enhance foreign students' Chinese language proficiency, deepen their appreciation of traditional culture, and nurture a nuanced understanding of Chinese sentiments. Such efforts are pivotal in extending the reach and impact of Cantonese opera culture on the international stage.

3.1. Cultural Significance: The Iconicity and Social Influence of Cantonese Opera

The imperative to disseminate Cantonese opera culture stems from its iconic status and expanding global influence, necessitating its inclusion in foreign language education.

3.1.1. The Iconicity of Cantonese Opera Culture

Cantonese opera culture holds a revered position in traditional Chinese performing arts, serving as a cultural icon cherished by overseas Chinese communities in Guangdong. Professor Liu Tieliang outlines three criteria to assess cultural events' iconicity: firstly, its reflection of a region's unique historical trajectory and contributions to its nation and global culture; secondly, its embodiment of collective character and enduring vitality across generations; and thirdly, its deep-seated integration into the daily lives of local communities [8]. Therefore, we can argue the Iconicity of Cantonese opera culture from these three aspects.

Since the 17th century, Cantonese opera has evolved through a rich historical process, integrating influences such as clappers and two-reeds from northern China, alongside local Lingnan traditions like Eagle's Cavity and Kunqu. Over more than 300 years of development, this art form has seamlessly fused with the phonetics of the Cantonese dialect, significantly expanding the expressive range of Chinese opera.

In terms of its reflection of historical processes and distinctive contributions, since the 17th century, Cantonese opera has assimilated widely from northern influences such as Bangzi and Erhuang melodies brought to Lingnan, incorporating local Yue opera, Kunqu opera styles, and indigenous Southern music elements to gradually form the most significant operatic form in the Cantonese-speaking regions. Over more than three centuries of nurturing, development, and innovation, Cantonese opera has achieved a harmonious fusion of Bangzi and Huang vocal styles with Yue dialect phonetics, creatively expanding the artistic expressions of Chinese opera.

In terms of its vitality, Cantonese opera is highly esteemed in the Pearl River Delta region of Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao, as well as among overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia, owing to its exceptional artistic value, diverse forms, and rich cultural heritage. It embodies an inclusive trait, blending distinctive local Lingnan art characteristics with refined elements from other opera genres in music, vocal techniques, repertoire, stage forms, and artistic performances, thus establishing itself as a unique and influential performing art deeply rooted in local folklore.

Regarding its significance, as the most influential and widely disseminated Chinese operatic genre within the Yue dialect region and beyond, Cantonese opera not only adheres to the fundamental norms of Chinese operatic arts in singing, recitation, acting, and martial arts, but also showcases a unique personality distinct from other genres in music, performance, literature, visual arts, and costume design.

Therefore, considering these three criteria comprehensively, Cantonese opera culture indeed exhibits iconic status.

3.1.2. Social influence of Cantonese Opera Culture

Cantonese opera holds significant social importance as well. Its elevation to the first batch of China's national intangible cultural heritage list in 2006, followed by its inclusion in UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009, underscores its growing cultural prestige and marks a new era of global recognition and development for this art form.

In summary, given its iconic cultural status and expanding global influence, integrating Cantonese opera into foreign language and cultural education programs is not only beneficial but also essential. It enriches the understanding of Chinese language learners worldwide, offering a profound insight into the diverse cultural tapestry of China.

3.2. Cultural Acceptance: Singaporeans' Unique Emotional Connection with Cantonese Opera

Singapore, a multi-ethnic nation in Southeast Asia where Chinese make up approximately 74% of the population (Singapore Department of Statistics 2022), has embraced Cantonese opera as a cherished cultural tradition. The saying "wherever there are Chinese, there is Cantonese opera" underscores its widespread appeal among the predominantly Cantonese-speaking Chinese community in Singapore, earning it the moniker "second home of Cantonese opera" [9].

Historically, Cantonese opera gained popularity in Singapore among Chinese immigrants before and after the Opium War, who regularly invited Cantonese opera troupes from China to perform. By the 1980s, the Singaporean government began actively preserving traditional cultures, including Cantonese opera, leading to increased visibility and appreciation of this art form. Ongoing exchanges with renowned troupes such as the Guangzhou Cantonese Opera Troupe and Hongdou Cantonese Opera Troupe have enriched Singapore's cultural and recreational landscape.

The deep-rooted affection of Singapore's Chinese community for Cantonese opera has significantly nurtured and expanded its presence abroad. This collective passion underscores a substantial and intrinsic demand for Cantonese opera culture among Singaporeans, making it a vital component of Chinese cultural education in Singapore.

3.3. Cultural Communication: The Imperative for Deepening Understanding and Appreciation of Chinese Culture

Enhancing the cultural self-confidence of the Chinese nation and showcasing the spiritual charm of Chinese artistic creation and imagination are crucial aspects. Cantonese opera, shaped by historical accumulation, embodies a unique aesthetic paradigm that deeply reflects the origins of Chinese culture. In essence, teaching Cantonese opera culture acts as a "window" through which foreigners can glimpse China's rich traditional heritage. By subtly engaging foreign students, it fosters their appreciation and longing for Chinese culture, potentially influencing China's political, economic, and international standing. This indirect impact underscores the role of teaching Chinese language and culture in China's global outreach.

Understanding the aesthetic and spiritual dimensions of traditional Chinese culture is facilitated for foreign students, illustrating regional cultural traits and local psychological orientations. Cantonese opera culture preserves many core

elements of China's traditional excellence. Through its portrayal of universal human values such as love, filial piety, respect for elders, neighborly love, anti-corruption stance, loyalty, courage, honesty, dedication, patriotism, friendship, thrift, and hard work, it showcases China's exemplary traditional values to the world. Additionally, its development and inheritance process vividly exhibit the Lingnan cultural attributes of openness, integration, tolerance, and selection of the best. The evolution of Cantonese opera's unique performance style, from songbook composition and cantata refinement to beat selection and vocal technique, reflects its adaptation across regimes and changing times.

Preserving the identity of the Chinese nation among diverse regional populations is essential. Cantonese opera serves as a significant aesthetic pursuit and a repository of national memory that resonates with regional cultural identities, embodying the spirit of Lingnan culture. Initially serving as a major source of solace for overseas compatriots seeking entertainment, Cantonese opera remains a vital cultural bridge, integrating Chinese and Western influences and enriching the cultural lives of overseas Cantonese communities.

4. Feasibility of Teaching Cantonese Opera in Singapore

4.1. Prerequisite: Strong Government Support

Strong government support is crucial for the teaching and promotion of Cantonese opera culture abroad. As China's national influence grows and overseas Chinese organizations gain strength, traditional Chinese opera, including Cantonese opera, has garnered increasing attention and backing from local communities and governments worldwide.

Firstly, the recognition of Cantonese opera groups and acclaimed performers by local governments underscores their commitment to Cantonese opera culture. For instance, in 1981, the Singaporean government established the prestigious Cultural Medallion to honor outstanding achievements in cultural arts. Both in 1981 and 1997, this award was conferred upon Hu Guixin and Lu Meihua of the Dunhuang Theatre, greatly acknowledging their exceptional contributions to promoting local operatic traditions. Additionally, Singapore's Turf Club established the Singapore Excellence Award in 1996 to recognize outstanding performances in international and Asian contexts, subsequently awarded to the Dunhuang Theatre the following year, making it the sole artistic ensemble at that time to receive such an honor [10].

Moreover, various levels of government officials have repeatedly attended and inspected local Cantonese opera performances, demonstrating governmental support for this theatrical culture. Against the backdrop of global multicultural development, senior government officials frequently visit Chinese communities to observe Cantonese opera performances. According to the Zhanjiang Daily, in 2008, the Cantonese Opera Troupe of Wuchuan City, Guangdong Province, performed at the Singapore International Arts Festival. The troupe was received by Mr. Ho Peng Kee, Senior Minister of State for Home Affairs and Law, and Ms. Fatimah Lateef, Member of Parliament for Singapore, who attended and watched the performance [11]. Similarly, the Guangzhou Cantonese Opera Troupe participated in the Singapore Chinese Cultural Festival and Lion City Local Opera Festival for three consecutive years. The local government sent high-ranking officials and respected figures to meet with troupe members, underscoring

their importance.

Most significantly, local governments demonstrate their high regard for Cantonese opera and other traditional arts through special funding initiatives aimed at their preservation and promotion. From 2007 to 2012, the National Arts Council of Singapore allocated SGD 180 million to support local artists and arts groups [12]. The efforts of the Cantonese opera troupe "Dunhuang Theatre" in international outreach have garnered recognition and praise from the Singaporean government, which annually allocates funding to support their Cantonese opera dissemination activities.

In summary, through awards, official endorsements, and financial investments, both civil society and the Singaporean government have integrated Cantonese opera into local cultural activities, providing essential policy and financial support for its teaching and dissemination abroad.

4.2. Guarantee: Teaching Resources for Cantonese Opera Culture

Rich local resources from Cantonese opera performance teams in Singapore are crucial for effective classroom teaching of Cantonese opera culture. These resources serve dual purposes: they enhance the training of teaching teams and provide immersive experiences for learners.

In Singapore, there are numerous Cantonese opera performance groups that constitute significant cultural resources for integration into Cantonese opera classroom instruction. These resources serve dual purposes: enhancing teacher training and facilitating direct interaction between professionals and Chinese language learners. For instance, activities can commence with demonstrations and tours focusing on Cantonese opera makeup, costumes, and props, offering students a close-up encounter with attire and stage paraphernalia. Selections from renowned classic operas such as "Princess Cheung Ping" can provide international students with a comprehensive understanding of various roles and the actors' multifaceted "singing, speaking, acting, and fighting" techniques.

Notably, troupes like the Nanning Cantonese Opera Troupe have performed at the Singapore International Children's Literature Festival multiple times. Additionally, troupes like the Zhanjiang Cantonese Opera Troupe and Foshan Cantonese Opera Troupe maintain robust cultural exchanges and collaborations with Singaporean counterparts [13]. The widely acclaimed Dunhuang Studio has been frequently invited to Singaporean schools to conduct public lectures on Cantonese opera knowledge, impart opera performance skills, and demonstrate Cantonese opera, serving as pivotal cultural support for Cantonese opera education abroad.

Furthermore, Cantonese opera's successful cross-cultural adaptation and transformation serve as crucial educational resources. Since the reform and opening-up era, classic Cantonese opera productions have been introduced overseas in various translated forms, including English-translated lyrics and dialogues, integrating Western music and dance elements into "English Cantonese opera," frequently performed in Southeast Asia and other regions [15]. This adaptation continues to sustain traditional Chinese essence in new regions and forms, significantly reducing cultural education barriers stemming from linguistic differences. This approach not only enriches cultural education but also promotes international understanding and appreciation of Cantonese opera's artistic depth and historical significance.

In conclusion, the collaboration with professional

Cantonese opera troupes provides vital cultural support for teaching Cantonese opera abroad.

4.3. Motivation: Interest in Learning Cantonese Opera Culture

Cantonese opera culture has wielded significant social influence and garnered immense popularity in Singapore over the past two centuries. Against this cultural backdrop, the new generation of Chinese language learners demonstrates a pronounced affinity for Cantonese opera. This trend is especially evident among children raised in overseas Chinese families in Guangdong Province. Exposed to the enchanting melodies from a young age through their grandparents' recitations, these children develop a profound emotional connection to Cantonese opera culture. This early exposure significantly enhances their motivation to delve deeper into its intricacies and complexities.

4.3.1. Existing Practices in Cantonese Opera Education

Based on the experiences of Chinese language learners in Southeast Asia, particularly after engaging with Cantonese opera performances, visiting backstage areas, experiencing Cantonese opera makeup and costumes, and studying performances, along with insights from interviews with Singaporean Chinese language learner, a notable trend emerges: despite language barriers, many learners maintain a strong interest in Cantonese opera.

For instance, international students from Jinan University visited the Guangdong Cantonese Opera Theatre for a cultural immersion. The program commenced with a detailed presentation on Cantonese opera makeup, costumes, and props, followed by backstage visits for role-playing and makeup experiences. Interactive sessions and captivating

performances allowed these students to intuitively grasp the artistic essence of Cantonese opera. This series of activities underscored a significant finding: "international students, even without proficiency in Cantonese, can still deeply appreciate Cantonese opera." [16]

Shan et al. [17] have advocated for an innovative approach termed the "second classroom," aimed at fostering deeper understanding of Guangdong regional culture through educational strategies. The initiative by South China University of Technology (SCUT) to establish an internship base with the Guangdong Cantonese Theater exemplifies this approach. Under this framework, international students transition from passive cultural recipients to active participants and custodians, immersing themselves in and preserving the distinctive allure of Cantonese opera culture.

This collaborative effort highlights that teaching Cantonese Opera not only enriches cultural understanding but also nurtures a profound appreciation for Cantonese opera among diverse audiences.

4.3.2. Survey and Analysis on Cantonese Opera Education

Additionally, a survey of 151 Singaporean students was conducted to assess their awareness of and enthusiasm for Cantonese opera culture. These students were enrolled in various prestigious institutions including Nanyang Technological University, National University of Singapore, Singapore Polytechnic, Singapore University of Technology and Design, Nanyang Technological Institute, St. Joseph's International School, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Raffles Music Academy, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore Overseas Chinese High School, and Singapore Institute of Management.

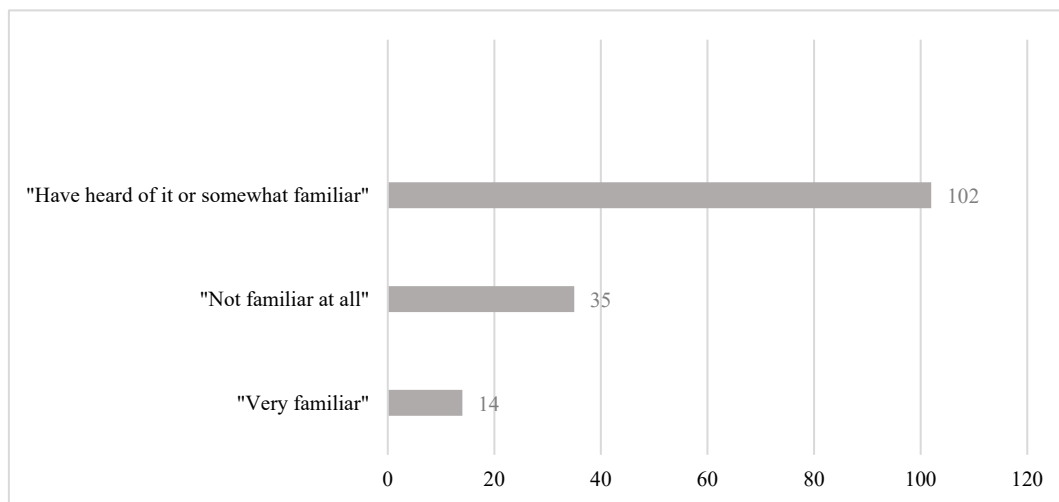


Figure 1. Survey Results on Singaporean Students' Willingness to Learn Cantonese Opera

Among the surveyed students, 67.55% were aware of Cantonese opera, while 23.18% had no knowledge of it at all. Interestingly, 9.27% had a deep understanding of Cantonese opera, indicating a significant but not widespread familiarity among the young Singaporean population. This suggests that Cantonese opera holds a degree of popularity among the new generation in Singapore. However, due to historical and contemporary factors surrounding Singapore's nation-

building efforts, which included diluting and suppressing ethnic and cultural identities to forge a national identity, traditional Chinese cultural elements like Cantonese opera have faced challenges in preservation and transmission. Despite these challenges, the survey revealed a noteworthy willingness among Singaporean students to engage in the study of Cantonese opera.

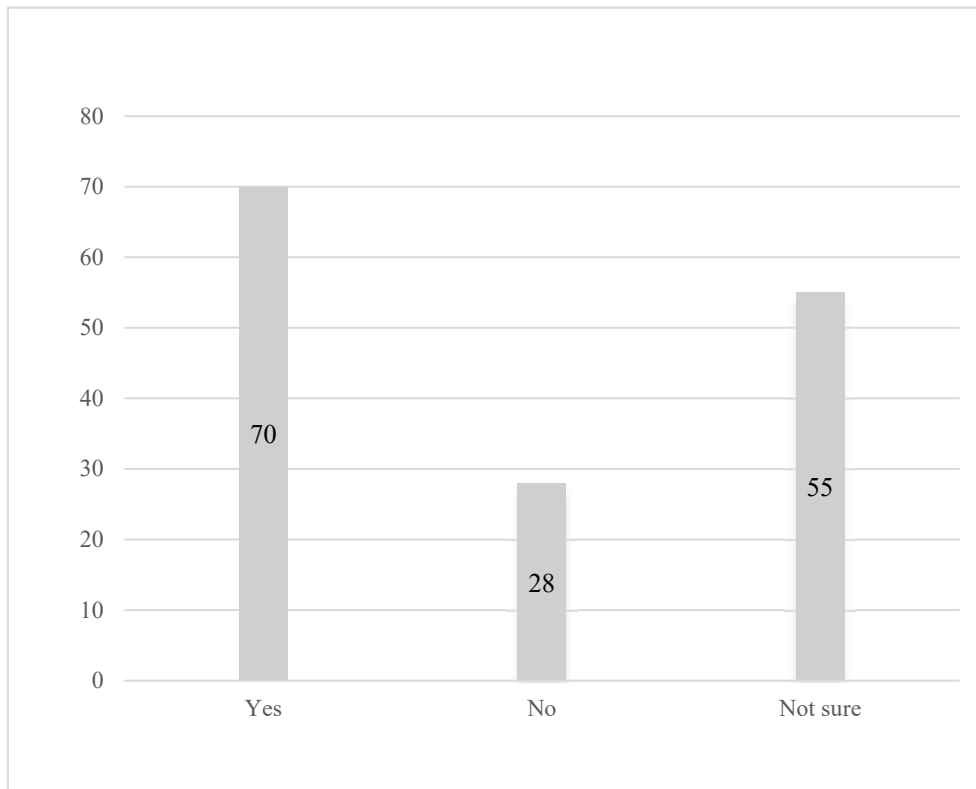


Figure 2. Survey Results on Willingness to learn Cantonese Opera among Singaporean Students

Out of the respondents, 70 expressed interests in learning Cantonese opera, while 28 did not. Among these 28 students, 26 of them had never heard of or been exposed to Cantonese opera at all. It shows that the majority of students who were not interested in learning Cantonese opera had no prior awareness or exposure to this art form. Therefore, lack of familiarity appears to be a key factor influencing interest in learning Cantonese opera among students surveyed.

Combining two findings, they show a landscape of awareness and interest in Cantonese opera among Singaporean students. While a significant percentage of respondents were aware of this traditional art form, a notable minority had deep understanding, indicating pockets of popularity within the younger generation. However, historical and contemporary challenges, including efforts to forge a unified national identity in Singapore, have impacted the preservation and transmission of Cantonese opera and other traditional Chinese cultural elements. Despite these obstacles, the survey reveals a strong willingness among students to learn Cantonese opera, especially among those previously unfamiliar with it. This highlights a clear opportunity for educational initiatives to integrate Cantonese opera into curricula, fostering deeper cultural appreciation and identity among Singaporean youth.

Moving forward, prioritizing innovative approaches to promote Cantonese opera could not only enrich Singapore's cultural diversity but also contribute to a broader understanding and acceptance of Chinese heritage in Southeast Asia. Addressing these issues with urgency and creativity will be essential in ensuring the continued relevance and appreciation of Cantonese opera among future generations.

In summary, this data underscores the feasibility and importance of integrating Cantonese opera into education initiatives in Southeast Asia, particularly in Singapore.

5. Conclusion

Singapore's embrace of Cantonese opera reflects a dynamic interplay of historical resilience and contemporary revitalization efforts. As Singapore increasingly values diverse cultural expressions, there's growing recognition of Cantonese opera's cultural significance and social impact. The integration of Cantonese opera into Singapore's educational framework presents a unique opportunity to enrich cultural understanding and appreciation among its populace. With robust governmental backing and abundant educational materials, there is a clear pathway to foster a deeper engagement with this traditional art form. By nurturing strong interest and providing accessible avenues for learning, Singapore can not only preserve its cultural heritage but also contribute to the global dissemination of Chinese cultural richness.

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