



The Role of Folk Music in Preserving Cultural Identity

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Abstract

Folk music represents an essential component of cultural heritage, reflecting the traditions, beliefs, values, histories, and collective experiences of communities across generations. As a form of oral and artistic expression, it serves as a medium through which cultural knowledge, social memories, and regional identities are preserved and transmitted. This paper explores the role of folk music in maintaining cultural identity in the context of globalization, urbanization, migration, and rapid technological advancement. It examines how traditional songs, musical instruments, regional melodies, and performance practices communicate the historical experiences, social customs, religious beliefs, and everyday lives of different communities. Folk music also contributes to strengthening social relationships, promoting intergenerational learning, and fostering a sense of belonging among individuals. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of folk music in cultural festivals, community celebrations, educational activities, and heritage tourism. Digital platforms, audio-visual archives, social media, and contemporary musical collaborations have created new opportunities for documenting, sharing, and revitalizing traditional musical forms. However, commercialization, declining interest among younger generations, migration, and the gradual disappearance of regional languages and traditions pose significant challenges to the preservation of folk music. The paper emphasizes the need for community participation, educational initiatives, cultural documentation, and institutional support to safeguard this intangible cultural heritage. It also recognizes the importance of balancing innovation with respect for traditional practices. The paper concludes that folk music is not merely a reflection of the past but a living expression of cultural identity that continues to evolve while maintaining connections with historical roots, collective memories, and shared human experiences.