**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
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AND COUNSELLING
(IJEPC)**www.ijepec.com**THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL SONGS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION: FOSTERING VALUES, CULTURAL IDENTITY,
AND CREATIVITY: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW**Rasidah Mohd Abdul Rahman¹, Jamilah Mohd Basir^{2*}, Azizah Zain³¹ Department of Early Childhood Education, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia
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DOI: 10.35631/IJEPC.1059019**This work is licensed under** [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)**Abstract:**

This article investigates the role of traditional songs in early childhood education through a systematic review of the literature, emphasizing their pedagogical, cognitive, and socio-cultural value. Traditional songs function as more than just learning tools; they enhance language acquisition, instill moral values, and strengthen cultural identity while encouraging creativity and active participation in young children. The review addresses the ongoing lack of traditional song integration in early education curricula, despite substantial evidence highlighting their benefits for moral development, cultural connection, and imaginative growth. It also notes a shift toward modern educational resources that often neglect local cultural elements. The study involved a comprehensive review of scholarly articles from well-established databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, and ERIC, focusing on works published between 2021 and 2025. Using the PRISMA framework to guide the selection process, 25 relevant studies were identified and analyzed. The results underscore the significant role traditional songs play in developing children's moral understanding, cultural awareness, creativity, language, and social abilities. Despite these advantages, their presence in contemporary curricula remains limited. The article advocates for renewed attention to the educational value of traditional music and recommends its deliberate inclusion in early learning strategies to support comprehensive and culturally responsive education.

Keywords:

Traditional Song, Early Childhood, Education

Introduction

Traditional songs have long been essential in early childhood education, serving as cultural transmitters and tools for cognitive, social, and emotional development (Chen&Dong, 2024; Nart, 2017). Their simple melodies and repetitive rhythms suit young learners, who benefit from multisensory, interactive experiences (Ardita, n.d.; Merritt & Castro, 2020; Mohammed Cherif, 2024). These songs support language, memory, and coordination (Honyian & Sondhiratna, 2024). Rhymes and alliteration improve phonological awareness, a foundation for literacy (Eccles et al., 2021; Mensah, 2016; Moritz et al., 2013). Hand movements and call-and-response encourage active learning and engagement (DeRosia, 2024; Kalinde, 2023).

Traditional songs preserve cultural heritage and shape identity, fostering connection in diverse contexts (Liu et al., 2024; Villodre, 2014). Multicultural songs encourage intercultural awareness and empathy (Alonge, 2024; Li et al., 2023). Integrating oral traditions into classrooms links learning to children's everyday lives (Eshach, 2007; Jirata, 2013).. However, traditional songs are often overshadowed by standardized materials, reflecting cultural homogenization and sidelining local knowledge (Campbell, 2017; Kindall-Smith et al., 2011). Scholars call for their increased inclusion in culturally responsive education (Cha, 2024; Pavlović et al., 2021). This paper explores traditional songs' role in early education, highlighting their value for identity, creativity, and lifelong learning.

This paper explores the role of traditional songs in early childhood education from pedagogical, cognitive, and socio-cultural perspectives. Drawing on music education, developmental psychology, and anthropology, it argues for their intentional integration into early learning curricula. The discussion highlights not only their educational benefits but also their role in supporting identity, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning.

Literature Review

Introduction

Traditional songs have played a longstanding role in early childhood education, supporting children's cognitive growth as well as their social and emotional development. This literature review examines the significance and influence of these songs in early learning contexts, drawing upon a range of scholarly research and evidence-based studies.

Cultural Relevance and Developmental Appropriateness

Traditional songs closely match cultural backgrounds and the developmental stages of young children, enhancing their effectiveness in early education. For example, Kenyan preschools use culturally relevant music instruction but still require better planning and more inclusive participation (Andang'o, 2009). Similarly, in Spain, traditional songs help develop artistic and interpretive skills while promoting social unity and cultural awareness (Casal de la Fuente & Gillanders, 2022).

Historical Context and Pedagogical Evolution.

Music has long been integral to early childhood education, rooted in Friedrich Fröbel's emphasis on singing and musical activities in kindergartens. His work laid the foundation for today's research-based, exploratory use of music in early learning (Mendeš & Dobrota, 2023), underscoring its enduring educational importance

Cognitive and Social-Emotional Benefits Music

Music, including traditional songs, supports child development by boosting cognitive skills such as creativity, problem-solving, and communication (J. Kim, 2017). It also enhances emotional and social well-being by fostering positive emotions and relationships (Ruokonen et al., 2021). These benefits are observed globally, with programs in Australia improving children's singing and attitudes toward music (Barrett et al., 2020).

Language and Literacy Development.

Traditional songs play a key role in developing language and early literacy by improving phonological awareness, vocabulary and communication, especially for multilingual children (Rowe et al., 2023). Research shows musical activities support language growth in diverse classrooms across various cultures (Paquette&Rieg, 2008; Paraponiari&Mattheoudakis, 2024).

Parental and Teacher Involvement.

Active involvement of parents and teachers is crucial to maximize the educational benefits of traditional songs in early learning. Parents' positive views on music education boost their support for children's musical experiences, recognizing benefits beyond music skills (Economidou Stavrou & Ntani, 2023). Likewise, teachers with stronger music backgrounds tend to better appreciate its role in child development (H. K. Kim & Kemple, 2011).

Challenges and Recommendations

Despite clear benefits, using traditional songs in early childhood education faces challenges such as limited resources, insufficient teacher training, and varying musical skills among educators (Kirby et al., 2023). Addressing these requires ongoing professional development, integrating music into daily routines (Barrett et al., 2018).

Conclusion

Traditional songs play a vital role in early childhood education, supporting cognitive, social, and emotional growth. Their use should match children's developmental stages and cultural contexts. Active involvement of parents and educators is crucial. Overcoming challenges like limited resources and teacher training gaps can enhance their impact on holistic development.

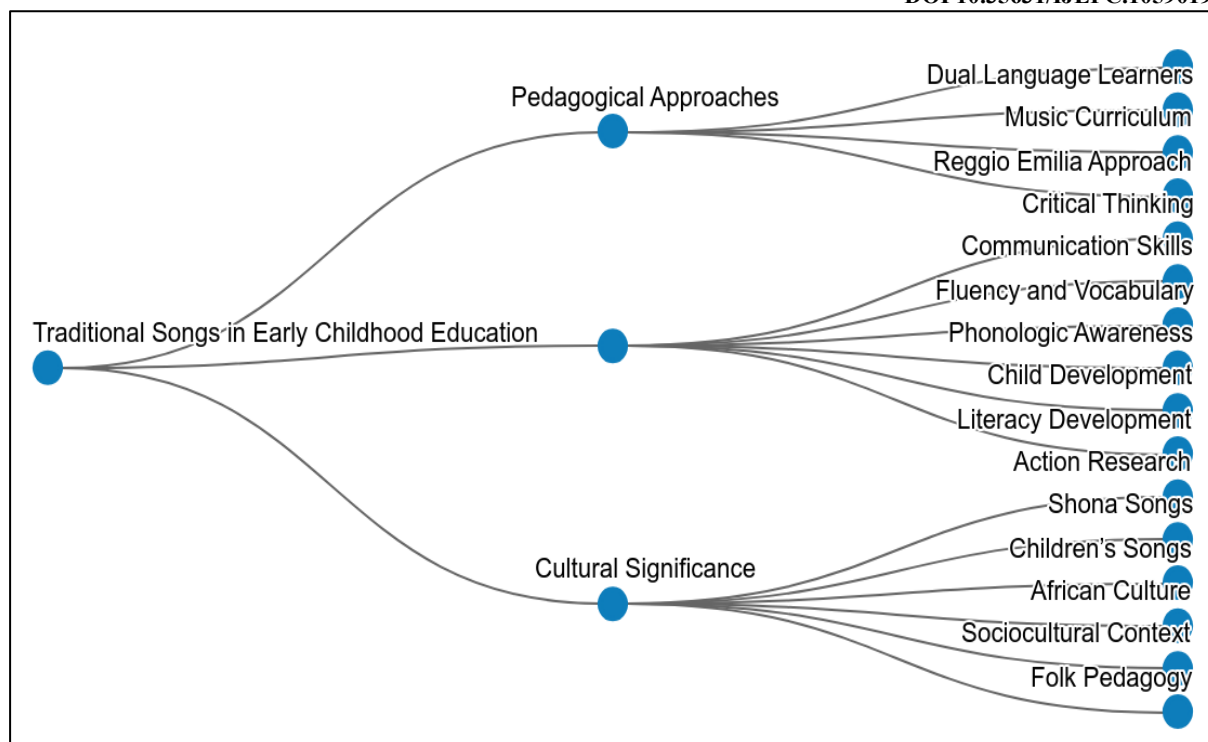


Figure 1: Traditional Song in Early Childhood Education

Research Question

Clear research questions are key to directing a systematic literature review (SLR), defining its scope and ensuring relevance. Well-designed questions enable unbiased study selection, efficient data analysis, and improve transparency and replicability. They help identify gaps, assess interventions, or explore trends. This review used the PICO framework (Population, Interest, Context) from Lockwood et al., (2015) to formulate focused questions, following SLR guidelines (Kitchenham, 2007).

Population (P)

This element identifies the specific group or individuals targeted by the research. It outlines whom the study is concerned with, such as a particular age group, patient population, or community.

Interest (I)

This refers to the central topic or phenomenon the study seeks to examine. It may involve an experience, behavior, intervention, or issue that is the primary focus of investigation.

Context (Co)

This component describes the environment or circumstances in which the population and interest are situated. It can include geographic regions, cultural settings, institutional environments, or other relevant situational factors that frame the research.

The PICO framework enables a structured formulation of research questions by delineating Population, Interest, and Context. This approach ensures clarity, sharpens the focus of inquiry, and supports an efficient and purposeful literature search or study design. Based on this framework, the present study developed the following three research questions:

1. In what ways do traditional songs support the development of moral values and character education in early childhood educational settings?
2. How do traditional songs contribute to the shaping of cultural identity and the preservation of historical narratives in early childhood education?
3. How are traditional songs integrated into arts-based pedagogical approaches to foster creativity and enhance engagement in early learning environments?

Material and Methods

This systematic review followed PRISMA guidelines (Page et al., 2021) to ensure clarity and rigor. Using Web of Science and Scopus for broad coverage, the process involved four steps: identifying studies, screening with criteria to exclude irrelevant work, assessing eligibility, and extracting data. This structured method reduces bias and supports reliable conclusions for research and practice.

Identification

This study used systematic review methods to collect relevant literature. It started by selecting core keywords, then identifying related terms from dictionaries, thesauri, encyclopedias, and previous studies. These terms formed search strings for Web of Science and Scopus, as shown in Table 1. The initial search found 535 publications related to the study’s focus.

Table 1: The Search String

Scopus	<p>TITLE-ABS-KEY ("traditional songs* OR "folk songs* OR "cultural music") AND ("Early* OR Child*") AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , 2025) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2024) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2023) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2022) OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR, 2021) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBSTAGE, "final") AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English")</p> <p>Date of Access: Mei 2025</p>
WoS	<p>Refine results for ("traditional songs" OR "folk songs" OR "cultural music") AND ("early*" OR "Child") (All Fields) and Article (Document Types) and English (Languages) and 2025 or 2024 or 2023 or 2022 or 2021 (Publication Years) and Music or Education Educational Research or Area Studies or Folklore (Web of Science Categories)</p> <p>Date of Access: Mei 2025</p>

Screening

In the screening phase, all records were checked for relevance to early childhood education. After removing duplicates and applying inclusion criteria, 63 studies remained (see Table 2). Only peer-reviewed journal articles in English from 2021–2025 were included. Book chapters, reviews, meta-analyses, conference papers, and unrelated sources were excluded. An additional 60 records were later removed based on these criteria.

Table 2: The Selection Criterion Is Searching

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Language	English	Non-English
Time line	2021 – 2025	< 2021
Literature type	Journal (Article)	Conference, Book, Review
Publication Stage	Final	In Press
Country	All Country	None

Eligibility

In the eligibility phase, 60 articles were closely examined by reviewing titles, abstracts, and content to confirm they met the study's criteria and objectives. After this assessment, 35 articles were excluded due to being out of scope, irrelevant titles or abstracts, or lack of full-text empirical evidence. Consequently, 25 articles were selected for the final analysis phase.

Data Abstraction and Analysis

This study employed an integrative approach to analyze and synthesize findings across various research designs, primarily focusing on quantitative methodologies. The primary objective of this phase was to identify key themes and subthemes relevant to research focus. The initial stage involved systematic data collection, which the groundwork for thematic development.

As illustrated in Figure 2, the researchers conducted a detailed examination of 25 selected publications, extracting statements and data that aligned with the objectives of the study. Each study was assessed for its methodology and findings, with particular attention given to those contributing meaningfully to the discourse on early childhood education. The process of theme generation was collaborative, with the lead author working closely with co-authors to derive themes grounded in the evidence.

A reflective log was maintained throughout the analysis to document insights, analytical decisions, uncertainties, and emerging interpretations. This practice enhanced the transparency and consistency of the analytical process. In instances where differing perspectives emerged regarding theme construction, the research team engaged in discussions to reach a consensus, thereby ensuring coherence and reliability in the final thematic framework.

Table 3: Number and details of Primary Studies Database

Authors	Title	Year	Source title	Scopus	WOS
Wan C.; Zhu X.	The Historical Narrative Of Taiwan Folk Song Movement As Student Cultural Production	2024	Discover Global Society	/	
Mu'ammar M.A.; et. al	Children's Good Character Development With Traditional Literature For Conveying Moral Values	2020	International Journal of Innovation, Creativity Change	/	
Huang Z.	To Explore The Artistic, Cultural And Education Characteristics And Inheritance Of Dance In Of Music And Dance Of Silk Road In The Han And Tang Dynasties	2024	Artseduca	/	
Serebrennikov A.	Centenary Paper Drunken Russian Don Quixote: A Forgotten Early Cervantine Reference	2025	Bulletin of Hispanic Studies	/	
Atkinson P.	Born In The USA: The Cigar Box Guitar, Object Displacement And Performative DIY	2021	Journal of Design History	/	
Callery J.J.; et. al	Engaging Ethnic Minority Communities Through Performance And Arts: Health Education In Cambodian Forest Villages	2021	International Health	/	
Jones J.D. et. al	An Analysis Of Traditional And Contemporary Children's Songs With Considerations For Music Therapy Practice	2025	Music Therapy Perspectives	/	
Fuquan E.; Karin K.	Evidence Of Acculturation In The Musical Culture Of The Tu Ethnic Group Of Qinghai Province, China	2022	International Journal of Interdisciplinary Cultural	/	
Mihelač L.	The Role Of Songbooks In The Preservation Of Children's Folk Songs In Kindergarten	2022	Journal of Elementary Education	/	
Cha D.-J.	Enriching Musical Understanding Through Kodály-Inspired Drawing Activities: An Action Research Study	2023	Korean Journal of Research in Music Education	/	
Burcu Y.	Transcultural Memory In The Study Of Folk Music In Turkey 78-Rpm Records Of The Ottoman American Diaspora	2024	World of Music	/	
Baltymova M.; et. al	The Distribution Area Of Kazakh Children's Folklore	2024	Critical Survey	/	

Cha D.-J.	Elucidating Feierabend's Conversational Solfège: Its Practical Application Of 12 Steps To Teaching Folk Songs	2024	Korean Journal of Research in Music Education	/	
Gao, J	Using interactive learning techniques in study of Chinese folk songs/Técnicas de aprendizaje interactivo para el estudio de canciones populares chinas	2025	Culture And Education	/	
Amani, J; Mgaiwa, SJ	Bringing students' culture into classroom: perspectives pre-primary teachers and parents on culturally-responsive instruction in Tanzania	2025	EDUCATION 3-13	/	/
Rono C.K.	Evolutions, Transformations and Trends in Kalenjin Traditional Songs	2022	Journal of African Cultural Studies	/	
Gregson K.	'Sport and song go together ...' A personal reflection on the art of the sporting balladeer	2020	Sport in Society	/	
Ko E.-S.; McDonald M.	Korean infants' perceptual responses to Korean and Western music based on musical experience	2023	Developmental Science	/	
Nedbal M.	Christoph Willibald Gluck's Operas and National Politics in Nineteenth-Century Prague	2023	Divadelni Revue	/	
Lin Y.; Liu H.	Rice and Rhyme: Seeing Zhuang Rice-related Folklore through Their Folk Songs	2021	Folklore (United Kingdom)	/	
Duffin R.W.	Mourning sickness: the musical birth of 'Barbara Allen'	2022	Early Music	/	
Bhagwat A.; Jijina P.	A Psychosocial Lens on an Indigenous Initiative to Address Menstrual Health and Hygiene in Indian Villages	2020	Social Work in Public Health	/	
Mitsui, T	Published Collections as the Sources of Ballad Tunes Sung by an Enthusiast in Japan	2022	Journal Of American Folklore	/	/
Yelemanova, S	Kazakh traditional song and musical heritage of Abay	2024	Musica Hodie	/	
Tao, SY	Listening to New China: The Art-Tune Records Company, Cultural Propaganda, and Music Transplantation in Early Cold War Hong Kong (1950s-1960s)	2022	China Perspectives	/	/

Quality of Appraisal

To support a rigorous quantitative assessment, each primary study was appraised following (Kitchenham, 2007) guidelines using the six-criteria model by (Abouzahra et al., 2020). Each item was rated on a three-point scale: “Yes” (1), “Partly” (0.5), and “No” (0). To support a solid quantitative comparison, each primary study was assessed using by (Abouzahra et al., 2020). Each criterion was rated on a three-point scale: “Yes” (1), “Partly” (0.5), or “No” (0).

1. QA1. Is the purpose of the study clearly stated?
2. QA2. Is the interest and the usefulness of the work clearly presented?
3. QA3. Is the study methodology clearly established?
4. QA4. Are the concepts of the approach clearly defined?
5. QA5. Is the work compared and measured with other similar work?
6. QA6. Are the limitations of the work clearly mentioned?

The table outlines the quality assessment approach based on predefined criteria. Three experts independently rated each item as “Yes” (Y), “Partly” (P), or “No” (N). Further details of the evaluation process are presented below.

1. Is the purpose of the study clearly stated?

This criterion checks if the study clearly outlines its goals and purpose. A clearly stated aim helps set the direction and scope of the research.

2. Is the interest and usefulness of the work clearly presented?

This criterion assesses whether the study effectively conveys its significance and potential contributions, highlighting the relevance and impact of the research.

3. Is the study methodology clearly established?

This criterion looks at whether the research method is clearly explained and appropriately matches the study’s goals. A clear and well-matched methodology is key to making the research valid and repeatable.

4. Are the concepts of the approach clearly defined?

This criterion assesses whether the study clearly outlines its theoretical framework and key concepts. Clear definitions are essential for understanding the research approach.

5. Is the work compared and measured with other similar work?

This criterion assesses whether the study engages with existing literature, positioning it within the academic context and emphasizing its contribution.

6. Are the limitations of the work clearly mentioned?

Each expert independently evaluates the study based on set criteria, with scores aggregated into a total. Studies scoring above 3.0 across all reviewers proceed to the next phase, ensuring a minimum quality standard.

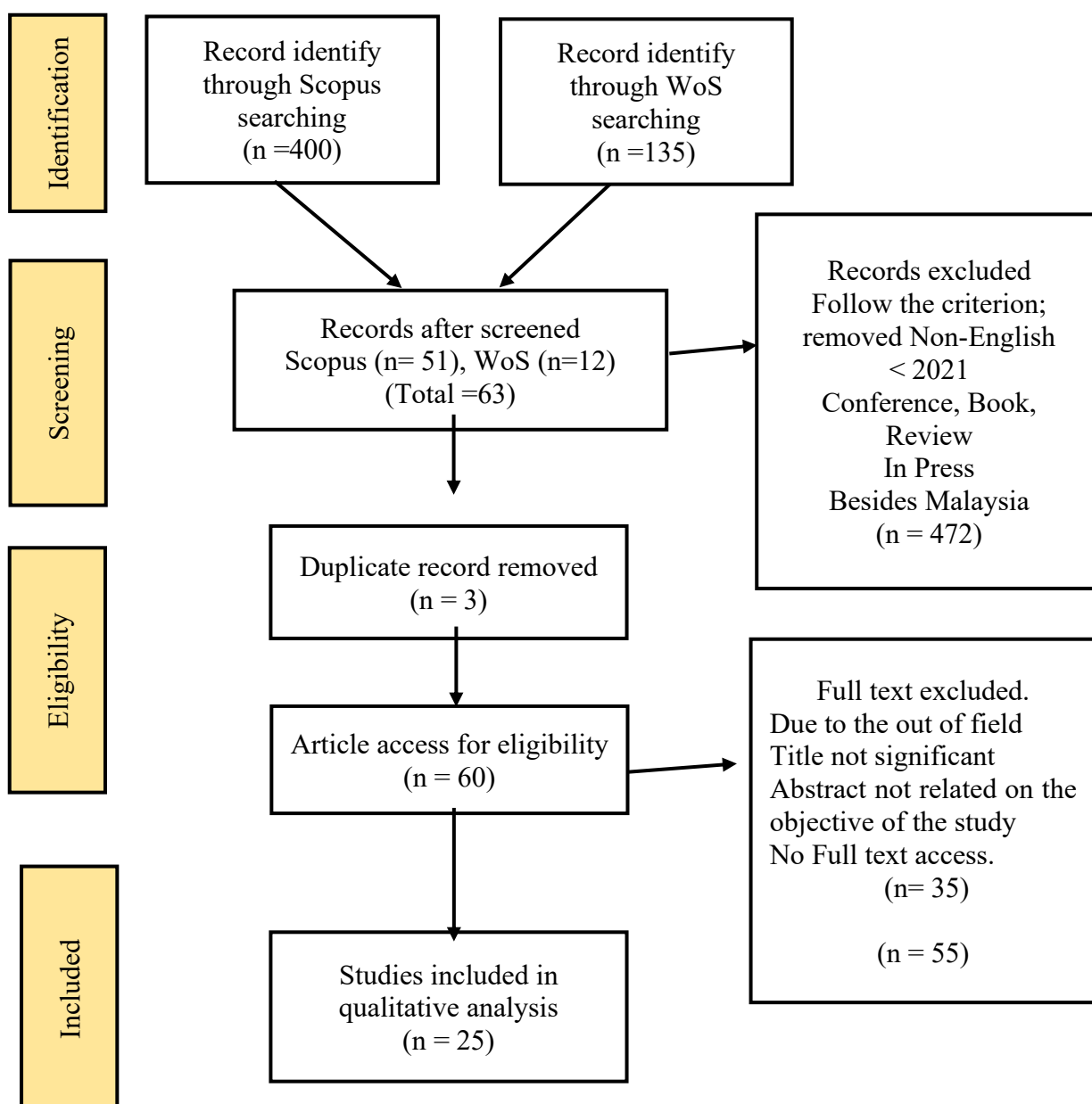


Figure 2. Flow Diagram of The Proposed Searching Study

Result and Finding

Background of selected study: based on quality assessment, Table: 4 shown the result of assessment performance for selected primary studies:

Table 4: Quality Assessment Table for the Selected Papers

Author	Title	QA1	QA2	QA3	QA4	QA5	QA6	Total Mark	Percentage (%)
Wan C.; Zhu X	The Historical Narrative Of Taiwan Folk Song Movement	0.5	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	1	4	66.7
Mu'ammam M.A.; et. al	Children's Good Character Develop With Traditional Literature For Conveying Moral	0.5	0.5	0.5	1	0.5	0.5	3.5	58.3
Huang Z.	Explore The Artistic, Cultural Education Characteristics Inheritance Dance In Music, In Han & Tang Dynasties	0.5	0.5	1	0.5	1	1	4.5	75
Serebrennikov	Centenary Paper Drunken Russian Don Quixote: A Forgotten Early Cervantine	1	0.5	1	0.5	1	1	5	83.3
Atkinson P.	Born In USA: The Cigar Box Guitar, Object Displacement Performative DIY	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	100
Callery J.J.; et. al	Engaging Ethnic Minority Communities Through Performance And Arts Education In Cambodia	0.5	0.5	1	1	1	0.5	4.5	75
Jones J.D.; et. al	An Analysis Of Traditional And Contemporary Children Songs For Music Therapy	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	3.5	58.3
Fuquan E.; Karin K.	Evidence Of Acculturation In The Musical Culture Of The Tu Ethnic Group Of Qinghai Province, China	1	1	0.5	1	0.5	1	5	83.3
MihelaÄ L.	The Role Of Songbooks In The Preservation Of Children's Folk Songs In Kindergarten	0.5	1	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	4	67
Cha D.-J.	Enriching Musical Understanding Through Kodály-Inspired Drawing Activities: An Action Research Study	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	1	3.5	58.3
Burcu Y.	Transcultural Memory In Study Of Folk Music In Turkey Records Of Ottoman American Diaspora	1	0.5	1	1	1	1	5.5	91.7
Baltymova M.; et. al	The Distribution Area Of Kazakh Children Folklore	0.5	1	0.5	1	1	1	5	83.3

Cha D.-J.	Elucidating Feierabenda Conversational Solfä"Ge: Its Practical Application Of 12 Steps Teaching Folk Songs	0.5	1	0.5	1	0.5	1	4.5	75
Gao, J	Using Interactive Learning Technique Chinese Folk Songs	0.5	0.5	1	0.5	1	1	4.5	75
Amani, J; Mgaiwa	Bringing Students' Culture Into Class: Perspective Pre-Primary Teachers: Parents On Culturally Responsive In Tanzania	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	100
Rono C.K.	Evolutions, Transformations And Trends In Kalenjin Traditional Songs	1	1	1	0.5	0.5	1	5	83.3
Gregson K.	Sport And Song Go Together A Personal Reflection On The Art Of The Sporting Balladeer	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	100
Ko E.-S.; McDonald M.	Korean Infants' Perceptual Respos To Korean And Western Music Based On Musical Experience	1	0.5	1	0.5	1	1	5	83.3
Nedbal M.	Christoph Willibald Gluck's Operas And National Politics In 19th-Century Prague	0.5	1	0.5	1	1	0.5	4.5	75
Lin Y.; Liu H.	Rice And Rhyme: Seeing Zhuang Rice-Related Folklore Through Their Folk Songs	1	0.5	1	0.5	0.5	1	4.5	75
Duffin R.W.	Mourning Sickness: Musical Birth Of Barbara Allen	1	0.5	1	1	1	0.5	5	83.3
Bhagwat A.; Jijina P.	A Psychosocial Lens Indigenous Initiative To Address Menstrual Health And Hygiene In Indian Villages	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	3	50
Mitsui T.	Publish Collections As The Sources Of Ballad Tunes Sung By An Enthusiast In Japan	0.5	0.5	1	0.5	1	1	4.5	75
Yelemanova, S	Kazakh Traditional Song And Musical Heritage Of Abay	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	1	3.5	58.3
Tao, SY	Listening To New China: The Art-Tune Records Company, Cultural Propaganda, And Music Transplantation In Early Cold War Hong Kong (1950s-1960s)	1	1	1	0.5	1	0.5	5	83.3

Summary

Summary of Article Quality Assessment Findings

Overall Score Range: The majority of articles achieved scores ranging from 58% to 100%, reflecting a moderate to high level of quality in outlining their research objectives and methods.

QA1 (Purpose of the Study) and QA2 (Usefulness and Interest):

These criteria consistently scored between 0.5 and 1.0, indicating that most authors clearly expressed the purpose and significance of their studies.

QA3 (Methodology) and QA4 (Conceptual Clarity):

There was clear variation in the clarity of these aspects. A number of articles covered them only in part, leading to moderate scores.

QA5 (Comparison with Other Works):

A number of articles did not provide a thorough comparison with earlier research, which led to lower scores for this criterion.

QA6 (Limitations):

This aspect was often overlooked or barely addressed, with many articles scoring 0.5 or less.

Discussion

The findings indicate that although most articles fulfill the fundamental standards of academic writing, there remains scope for enhancement, especially in the following areas:

1. Clearly outlining methodological frameworks,
2. Providing a thorough explanation of conceptual foundations, and
3. Addressing the limitations of the study.

These elements are crucial for strengthening a study's credibility, reproducibility, and overall scholarly value. Articles that achieved full scores demonstrated strong structure and clarity, serving as effective examples for future academic work.

The themes identified during the analysis were refined to ensure consistency. Four experts in early childhood education reviewed the selected themes: Dr. Jamilah Mohd Basir, a lecturer in early childhood education; Prof. Madya Dr. Azizah Zain, a senior lecturer in preschool education; Dr. Sailajah Nair Sukumaran, a specialist in special needs preschool education; and Dr. Noazima Wahab, also a lecturer in preschool education. They evaluated the themes for relevance, clarity, and alignment with field standards. The authors reviewed the themes for accuracy and resolved discrepancies through discussion. When inconsistencies arose, the team collaborated to make revisions. Final improvements were made based on expert feedback to strengthen the validity and coherence of the results.

Theme 1: Character Education and Values in Early Childhood Education

Comprehensive Thematic Analysis: Character Education and Values in Early Childhood Education through Traditional Songs

Traditional songs in early childhood education foster moral and character development. Studies by Amani & Mgaewa, (2025) and Mihelac, (2022) show that these songs convey ethical values. Mu'ammam & Affandy, (2020) highlight oral traditions as effective tools for value

transmission. Amani & Mgaiwa found Tanzanian folk music promotes inclusivity and cultural ties, while Mihelac observed that Slovenian songs preserve identity and values. Studies confirm music's role in moral growth. Cha, 2023, 2024; Jones et al., (2025) used Kodály-based drawing and Feierabend's Solfege to show how simple folk songs support ethical learning and therapy. Wan & Zhu, (2024) linked Taiwan's folk revival to cultural values, while Fuquan & Karin, (2022) found the Tu people used music to sustain moral teachings.

Traditional songs hold strong value in marginalized communities. Callery et al., (2021) and Gao, (2025) found that combining folk music with drama and quizzes effectively delivers moral and health messages in low-literacy areas. Globally, (Burcu, 2024; Baltymova & Pangereyev, 2024, and Serebrennikov, 2025). Showed that folk music preserves cultural values linking diaspora recordings to Ottoman ethics, Kazakh folklore to local morals, and Russian songs to shared ethical ideas.

Theme 2: Culture, Tradition, and Historical Narratives in Education

Traditional Songs as Vessels of Cultural Identity and Early Learning

Studies show traditional songs express creativity and preserve cultural identity. Rono, (2022) traced Kalenjin songs from 1920s chants to modern styles, reflecting cultural shifts. Lin & Liu, (2021) linked Zhuang farming songs to rural identity, while Mitsui, (2022) showed how Western ballads influenced Japan through print. These works highlight folk songs as living archives and informal learning tools, especially for young children.

Traditional Songs as Narratives of History and Politics

Traditional music often carries historical and political meaning. Nedbal, (2023) showed how Gluck's operas reflected Czech and German identities in 19th-century Prague. Duffin, (2022) traced "Barbara Allen" as a form of collective memory, while Duffin, (2022) and Gregson, (2020) linked sports ballads to social commentary. These studies show that folk music captures shared experiences and political themes.

Folk Songs in Socialization and Educational Interventions

Folk songs not only preserve culture but also promote education and social awareness. Bhagwat & Jijina, (2020) showed how Project Sakhi in rural India used traditional songs to address menstrual hygiene, effectively engaging women and adolescents. Ko & McDonald, (2023) found that musical exposure enhanced Korean infants' attention, curiosity, and vocabulary. These findings underscore folk music's potential in fostering learning and behavior change, particularly in early education and public health.

Theme 3: Arts, Media, and Creativity in Teaching and Learning

Mitsui, (2022) examined how Anglo-American ballads performed in 1960s Japan were drawn from English folk anthologies, emphasizing how musical literacy and print access support cross-cultural exchange. The study shows how traditional music fosters cultural learning beyond its origin. Tao, (2022) studied how Art-Tune Records in Hong Kong adapted traditional and socialist Chinese music during the Cold War to bypass colonial and U.S. censorship. Acting for China Records Factory, they created region-specific songs to reinforce Chinese identity and socialism among overseas audiences.

These studies show traditional music's roles beyond entertainment, including education, cultural preservation, and political messaging. Mitsui emphasizes individual efforts in maintaining traditions, while Tao highlights institutional identity-shaping. Both stress folk music's educational and cultural impact, especially in early learning and emotional growth.

Conclusion

Traditional songs play a key role in shaping children's values and character by teaching lessons like kindness, respect, and community through familiar cultural elements. Passed down through generations, folk songs and oral stories make learning engaging through music, storytelling, and games. They also help preserve heritage and deliver health, social, and moral messages, especially in low-literacy or under-resourced communities, making them valuable tools for character education in early childhood. Beyond moral lessons, traditional music supports cultural preservation, historical storytelling, and early learning. These songs capture daily life and beliefs, serving as informal records of social and political history. They also enhance modern education by promoting language development and health awareness.

Studies by Mitsui, (2022) and Tao, (2022) highlight traditional music's role in education and cultural identity. Mitsui shows how Japanese performers used Western folk songs to build cross-cultural connections, emphasizing the importance of musical literacy and access to printed materials. Tao examines how traditional Chinese music was adapted in Hong Kong during the Cold War to strengthen cultural ties among overseas Chinese. Together, these studies show that traditional music enriches early childhood education by fostering emotional, cognitive, and cultural development.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest to report regarding the present study

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