

Subculture in Online Youth Popular Music Community: Theory and Discourse

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Abstract: *This study was intended to evaluate the subculture in the online youth popular music community in China. This study was significant to the youth to facilitate online sub-cultural communities about digital medium, music sharing, and joining in social networking. It is essential to highlight that significant organization and publishers have linked themselves with the discipline to confirm the validity and acceptance of popular music. Ethnography was used as a critical methodological approach to study subculture and online youth popular music in this research. The results indicate that subculture in online youth popular music is significantly influenced in their daily lives. Young people are becoming more reliant on popular music and the technology to listen to it. Today's young people may see online popular music and music subculture as a new phenomenon. Subcultures in the online youth popular music community seem to be extremely compatible with rich media, online communities, and the development and reproduction of strong connections between communicators. It was claimed that online youth popular music was an important event for youth to establish friendships and other social networking to participate in music community.*

Keywords: *Popular Music, Subculture, Digital Medium, Digital Native, Youth Culture*

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Since the early 1990s, the effects of online media have been felt by many segments of society in both developed and developing countries. Perhaps unsurprisingly, young people have quickly acquired digital media gadgets and integrated them into their daily lives. Such early adoption follows a trend that has been seen since the 1950s, in which the young are considered to be comfortable with and adapt rapidly to new kinds of technology (Reimer, 1995). While we would be hesitant to promote the mythology of 'digital natives' (Bennett et al., 2008), the particular characteristics of digital media have seen their diffusion and adoption by young continue at an unprecedented rate. The interactive attributes of digital media and their combined capabilities – as communication devices, search engines, cameras, laptop computers, and so on – have given them a high degree of attraction among young consumers.

The internet continues to have a significant impact as a feature of the digital media landscape located at the center of young people's interaction with various digital media devices. Through intersecting with the daily activities of youth, the internet has added new dimensions to what has traditionally been referred to as youth culture. The internet, in particular, has served to redefine notions of public and private space (Lincoln, 2012) as well as the relationship between the global and the local (Hodkinson, 2003), while also giving rise to new ways in which young people frame and understand their interactions and associations with others. As we have previously stated (Robards & Bennett, 2011), rather than believing that there is a clear difference between offline and online contacts amongst adolescents in the post-digital age, such encounters often reflect a seamless blending of offline and online features and characteristics. Such apparent changes in how young people interact with one another, geographically, chronologically, and socially, raise new issues regarding the concept of youth culture.

Youth culture has traditionally been seen to be something linked by geographical proximity and a collective affinity verified by collaborative visual displays of taste, usually shown via style, dress, and other

kinds of modification. Such types of visually spectacular youth culture, expressed at the level of the actual neighborhood or community, served as a focal point for much of the early work on youth cultures and, as they were often referred to, "subcultures" (Hebdige, 1979). With the growing significance of the internet as a method of articulating and maintaining a young cultural practice, we can no longer see youth culture as a solely physical, geographically limited phenomenon. Simultaneously, and as the chapters in this book will demonstrate, the forms of practice that comprise youth culture are diversifying via the internet to the point that youth culture can no longer be considered primarily limited by aspects of style.

On the contrary, it might be argued that with the advent of the internet, many of the more commonplace activities that were previously overlooked in youth culture study have become new and important focuses for modern youth researchers. In particular, participant observations and fieldwork generated from ethnomusicology are valuable methods in researching popular music cultures. However, its primary emphasis on non-Western music and lack of semiology focus in connection to the music's broader culture make it unsuitable for the holistic study of popular music. With the development of new media like moving-coil microphones and broadcasting booms about 1921, the sociology of music developed. This approach arose against a backdrop of social and political upheaval, such as the growing power of working-class organizations and the consequences of capitalism. Tagg (2012) contends that the widespread dissemination of music through new media has made many kinds of music, no matter how 'high' or 'low,' accessible to listeners.

Negus and Hesmondhalgh (2002) also argue that writers from the major disciplines that comprise popular music studies were historically 'reacting against' specific analytical approaches, contributing to popular music studies' pluralism and interdisciplinary nature. Compared to the rest of the globe, developing such young subcultures and trends is relatively new in China. It is linked to China's late but fast economic and technical growth. Chinese teenagers establish connections and develop virtual social interactions on cutting-edge online platforms, unlike those recognized in the West. These interactions allow people to create an online collective identity while also distinguishing themselves from others. This, however, may lead to their seizing the new trends in understanding how long they will endure. The boundaries of adolescent subcultures and trends are often blurred and overlapping. This is also due to young people's need to identify others while simultaneously distinguishing themselves from the crowd.

1.2 Popular music and online popular youth subculture in China

Popular music is a multidisciplinary subject that is informed by and affected by musicology and social history (Hesmondhalgh and Negus, 2002). It is suggested that popular music is usually seen not as a commodity but as a set of cultural activities that improve people's everyday lives and help them from individual and community identities (Hesmondhalgh, 2013). Popular music has been explained using a variety of techniques and perspectives from literature and other disciplines. However, because of the 'variety of what popular music must contain' (Beard and Gloag, 2005) and the many conflicting meanings it implies, it is almost impossible to completely and rationally define popular music.

Through academic discussions, a chronological account of Chinese popular music genres and online youth subculture has been identified in Chinese popular music studies, including the emergence of Westernized Chinese music in the early twentieth century and popular music shidaiqu (era songs) in the 1930s, Mao's revolutionary songs from 1966 to 1976, and the resurgence of Cantonese and Taiwanese pop under Deng's edict. Numerous significant academic contributions to the study of Chinese popular music have been made. Manuel (1988) offered a basic study of the Westernization and modernization of Chinese popular music in the context of social change in his book *Popular Music of the Non-Eastern World*. Similarly, Chong's (1991) study of Chinese rock megastar Cui Jian showed the political nature of Jian's songs. Jones' seminal English-language analysis of contemporary Chinese popular music (1992) separates the two main musical genres of tongsu and rock music (yaogun). It focuses on popular music's state-imposed cultural hegemony.

Steen (1996) documented the early years of Chinese rock from 1984 to 1993, while Huot's (2000) examinations of Chinese rock from Mao's era to Nirvana offered exhaustive examinations of new Chinese cultural contexts. Efir's (2001) ethnographic study concentrated on rock music and its urban context in 1990s Beijing, while Jones' (2001) work chronicled the development of Chinese popular music, its media culture, and colonial modernism during the Chinese jazz period (early twentieth century). Huang's (2001,

2003) assessments of rock's cultural importance from the late 1980s to the early 2000s focused on its authenticity and political implications. Baranovitch's (2003) study of popular music, ethnicity, gender, and politics from the "Mao fad" to the "rock fad" led the author to claim that rock music, Northwest Wind, and Prison Songs offer new voices for Chinese young and the poor in the face of state-controlled creative discourses.

Finally, Ho (2006) analyzes the strong connection between music and politics in his research of social progress and nationalism in Chinese popular songs from the 1910s to the 2000s. Moskowitz's (2010) study on Mandarin-pop in mainland China and Taiwan focuses on the mid-1990s and debunks the stereotype of Mandarin pop as "vapid, lacking in originality, and mostly performed by attractive but mediocre singers" (Guy, 2012). De Kloet (2010) conducted research in the mid-1990s on illegally imported dakou cultural goods and cosmopolitan music scenes in the era of globalization. Campbell (2011), a Canadian journalist, writes on the revolutionary elements of Chinese rock through his 'insider' status as a Chinese rock musician. Groenewegen-Lau (2014) examines how Chinese rock became state-sponsored, while Chu (2017) uses a historical narrative to study Hong Kong Cantonese music from the 1950s to the new century. While considerable scholarly attention has been given to the previous generation of Chinese rock in the late 1980s and early 1990s, only a limited amount of academic attention has been dedicated to rock music scenes in the late 1990s and early 2000s (two). Additionally, Chu (2017) emphasizes the present academic climate, which is dominated by Chinese rock music study, with a noticeable lack of Mandarin- and Cantonese-pop research. Throughout my research on Chinese rock music, I've seen many studies that focus on issues linked to the conflict between rock and pop music, such as authenticity against cultural hegemony and authenticity versus commercialization.

Deng's Chinese Economic Reform marks a watershed moment in the history of popular music and popular culture, as it fundamentally alters China's national contexts from the Mao era; the Tiananmen Square student protest's failure marks another watershed moment in the development of online youth subculture. The next section provides the historical context for my understanding of contemporary Chinese online youth subculture, drawing heavily on Clark (2012) and Baranovitch's work (2003). Clark (2012) argues that the Chinese online youth subculture is characterized by substantial generational changes in collective identities for each historical period. He elucidates an apparent young cultural development via his study of three historical junctures: since 1968, the rebellious Red Guard online youth subculture; a complex underground online youth subculture influenced by global trends in 1988, with the growth of the television and film industries and the emergence of the rock music scene; and a more commercialized and digital online youth subculture marked by Clark (2012). Clark (2012) notes that the term "subculture" (yawenhua) was first used in Chinese academia almost half a century after its association with the Chicago School and more than two decades after the CCCS's founding activity. Subculture is a relatively new idea in China, both historically and politically, having been banned by the Communist government prior to the 1980s. As a result, sociologists began using the word "subculture" sparingly only in the 1990s.

1.3 Subcultures in online youth popular music community in China

While Chinese subcultures became visible in the 1980s as a result of China's Economic Reform and the 'Open Door' policy, Clark traces their origins to Mao's revolutionary era (1966–1966), when Mao urged Red Guard youth to rebel against intellectuals, parents, and the traditional Chinese establishment. Clark (2012) asserts that the Chinese online youth subculture originated during the Cultural Revolution, when young people participated in creative efforts to further Mao's philosophy. Simultaneously, Mao's late 1960s 'Down to the Countryside' program, which required millions of children to be transported to rural areas to learn from poor peasants, provided an outlet for creative expressions such as frustrations, homesickness, and aspirations.

Certain aspects of the sent-down youth's distinct popular culture laid the groundwork for a flourishing of cultural innovation in the early 1980s' under Deng's economic reform, such as the circulation of hand-copied novels on rural farms and the popularity of fiction, poetry, and creative prose (sanwen) in the early 1970s, when some of the sent-down youth were able to return to cities. Clark makes a distinction between online youth subcultures created during the Cultural Revolution and those established after economic reform, stating that shifting national and social conditions following economic reform have resulted in 'new and unimagined phenomena.' Clark asserts that distinct online adolescent subcultures emerged in the PRC

only in the late 1960s. When these online adolescent subcultures formed, they were not like Western subcultures, which are characterized by their 'oppositional, theatrical, rebellious, and anti-commercial nature.' However, as economic growth, a widening of popular cultural elements, and China's growing globalization occurred, these Western subculture traits increased.

Capitalism, on the other hand, has boosted young interest in consumption and profit-making. According to Kochhar (2011), by the late 1990s, the globe had succumbed to a "consumerism fever." Around the turn of the century, this was supplemented by a desire to acquire English and study in Western countries. 2008 is another milestone year in the history of China's online youth subculture. Since the economic reform, a culture of consumerism has developed, which has resulted in an even more overt consumer culture among Chinese youth, especially as the middle class has grown. While materialistic hedonism has aroused the attention of Chinese youth, unequal access to materialistic spending has piqued the interest of confident young people as well. The internet and social media have become platforms for Chinese youth to air their concerns, express their identities, and voice their views.

The growing gap between China's middle and lower classes shows the complexity and adaptability of contemporary Chinese society. However, since the majority of urban young were born under the one-child policy, the internet has become a place for Chinese youth to socialize, entertain themselves, and share alternative information in everyday life. As a consequence, social media and the internet have provided Chinese youth a more prominent platform to express fandom, idealism, and complaints, which serve as vehicles for escaping reality and constraints (Graaf 2014, Wallis 2011). Additionally, the Beijing Summer Olympic Games heightened cultural contacts between China and the West, creating new opportunities for consumer culture development in the future. Clark's (2012) work is significant because it defined Chinese online youth subculture by examining the social, political, and cultural contradictions of subcultural practice' (Blackman 2014: 503), which encompasses a range of youth cultural forms distinguished by three historical eras and themed around spaces, bodies, and rhythm. His work is distinguished by the breadth of his data sources, which include photos, films, academic publications, and research papers.

Clark's theoretical interpretations, however, as Vadrevu (2013) points out, are insufficient to support his ambition to fully interpret a variety of complex issues, including "the continuities and discontinuities between Chinese youth and youth in the West, between youth and other demographic groups in China, and between Chinese youth in the past and present" (Vadrevu 2013). According to Vadrevu (2013), Clark's work on modern Chinese culture creates tenuous connections with a variety of disciplines, enabling him to engage freely with the Chinese culture he is so familiar with. My research identified key historical periods in Chinese online youth subculture and popular music when changes and new developments happened. These shifts in Chinese online youth subculture and popular music are inextricably connected to state policies, Western cultural influence, and the social structures in which Chinese youth participate.

1.4 Research Objectives

This study was intended to analyze the subculture in the online youth popular music community in china and its theory and discourse. Specifically, it seeks to answer what the significance of digital media in popular music and youth subculture for the young people is.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Urgent academic and social attention is needed to address the increasing developments, pressures, and tendencies that young people are navigating in popular music culture. There seems to be little literature that deals directly with contemporary popular music and how youngsters engage with it. This is due, in part, to the rapid development of popular music culture, which causes studies to become out of date and unrepresentative of contemporary popular culture.

While there is a wealth of scholarly material accessible that deals with certain elements of my study, such as consumption or the creation of identity or gender, academic literature seldom deals directly with young people's identity development as a consequence of popular music consumption. There is evidence that indicates popular music has an impact on daily life and has a part in people's self-perception.

This study was significant to the youth to facilitate online sub-cultural communities about increased

music community, knowledge sharing, and social networking in China. It is essential to highlight that significant organizations and publishers have linked themselves with the discipline to confirm the validity and acceptance of popular music as a subject of study. When a variety of popular music discourses proliferated in China, including the production and consumption of popular music was taken seriously as a field of study for its growing social and historical significance.

Youth will become familiarized with the full range of communicative innovative tools and media for the awareness of and sensitivity to the power and importance of representation of self and others through online youth popular music. Popular music has become portable, digital, quicker to download, and more readily available in recent years of rapid technological development. This paper presents the generation of young people who have grown up immersed in the worlds of the iPod, social media, YouTube, and music videos and see what impact popular music culture has had on identity and gender development among today's youth.

2. Review of Related Literature

Since the late 1960s, popular music and its associated cultural contexts has been the primary subject of research in the relevant disciplines of sociology, media, and cultural studies. Theoretical perspectives and critical concepts in cultural studies, particularly sub-cultural theory connected with the work of the CCCS, have had a significant impact on popular music studies. The term “subculture” was coined as a way to explain postwar online youth subculture, and it has been defined as “not just different from, but also in connection to” the mainstream culture (Blackman, 2005). This implies that a subculture is a social group with rules and behaviors that vary from or are opposed to the mainstream population.

Subculture theory investigates the connection between youth, identity, musical taste, and style and has been used in various fields, including sociology, psychology, criminology, and anthropology. According to Bell (2010) and Blackman (2014), the interdisciplinary perspective has transformed subculture into not just a “hotly disputed” analytical instrument in academic discussions but also a “chameleon theory” capable of adapting to various sociological paradigms. It is important to note that the concept of subculture emerged through academic debates in the United States and the United Kingdom, specifically through what became known as Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS). While both the American and British approaches study subculture by using biology and psychology to define deviant behavior at an early stage of theoretical development, the Chicago School approach focuses on young people’s deviant behaviors that emerge in response to normal conditions of urban social life.

This research was based on anthropological research conducted in cultural and communal contexts. Subcultures were seen as cultural phenomena that counteract anomie and promote social cohesiveness via ‘symbols, rituals, and meaning.’ They discuss the normalcy of deviant behavior as based on ‘the social and economic circumstances of daily life within the region’ instead of viewing it as an abnormal and pathological state. Other scholars have drawn on various theoretical traditions to help them grasp the word.

The British subculture theorization developed in the 1920s with a distinct concept of a subculture than the Chicago School. According to Blackman (2014), psychological and pathological perspectives impacted American and British methods. Early British sub-cultural theories emphasized the abnormality of adolescent behavior in contrast to the Chicago School’s normalcy and saw it as part of social issues within civilized society. It was not until the 1960s, especially in the 1970s and 1980s, that academics affiliated with the Centre for Contemporary Studies revised the concept of deviance, youth, and subculture (CCCS). Since the postwar period, Hebdige (1979) and Cohen (1972) have concentrated on problems of class and style-centered online youth subcultures via adolescent music groups such as skinheads, mods, punks, teddy boys, and so on. Stuart Hall and his colleagues from CCCS defined the concept of subculture in the landmark edited book, *Resistance through Rituals* (1975), integrating both social and cultural theories and situating subculture about Gramsci’s (1971) definitions of hegemony. They also drew on a distinctly Marxist base and superstructure problematic based on Levi-Strauss’ (1966) structuralism theories and Barthes’ (1979) semiological analysis of everyday cultural activities. Subcultures were seen as the collective responses of working-class youth in postwar Britain to conflicts and opposition to structural change.

According to Blackman (2014), ‘subcultures are no longer pathological,’ but rather a creative ensemble construction to resolve the contradictory societal status between ‘traditional working-class parent culture

and a modern hegemonic culture of mass consumption dominated by media and commerce.’ It is worth noting that popular music was put at the center as a platform for youth to express identities and perform ‘multiple narratives of bricolages (styles) use a ‘do-it-yourself (DIY) approach.’ Online youth subcultures and collective action were examined within the social contexts in which they occur using the Chicago School and (especially) the CCCS methodology sub-cultural ideas. On the other hand, they have faced many critiques from academics, particularly postmodern theorists.

Traditional sub-cultural approaches, according to postmodernists, focus too heavily on class as a factor. As such, they are restricted within a ‘Marxist’ theoretical framework and thus rely too heavily on a ‘rigid hegemony model,’ ignoring the pleasurable aspects of the music (de Kloet, 2010). The theories have also been criticized for concentrating only on ‘working-class membership,’ disregarding collectiveness’s ‘instabilities and temporariness,’ and dismissing the importance of bodies and individual action.

Rather than a focused binary dichotomy of working-class resistance and cultural hegemony, other variables that affect rock music involvement, such as individual agency, taste, and media and business. In the context of Chinese rock subcultures, rock music participants come from various socioeconomic backgrounds, including a mix of middle-class and working-class Chinese adolescents. The shifting socio-cultural conditions under which rock music cultures emerge, the influence of media and commerce, and the individual life experiences, social relationships, emotions, and leisure of Chinese youth are all important aspects to consider when studying Chinese rock music cultures as a complex culture.

With the criticisms of conventional sub-cultural theories, a slew of new words using postmodern methods developed to replace or update the concept of subculture. Tribes or neo-tribes lifestyles, club cultures, scenes, and postmodern subcultures are among the new terminology (Muggleton, 2000). According to Hodkinson (2002), one of the most popular terms to replace subculture is neotribe, which Maffesoli (1996) defined as a ‘consumer group identity through rituals’ and ‘a source of emotional attachment’ in which individuals have a degree of autonomy over forces of normalization such as the media, the fashion industry, and fast-food chains. It extended the concept of neo-tribe drawn from Maffesoli’s theory in more recent work, with remarks from British sociologist Hetherington (1998) and Canadian geographer Shield (1992). Bennett argued that the word “subculture” should be replaced with “neo-tribe,” citing conventional subculture theories’ overestimation of the fixity of young groups and their failure to portray the complicated connection between individual preference and identity.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

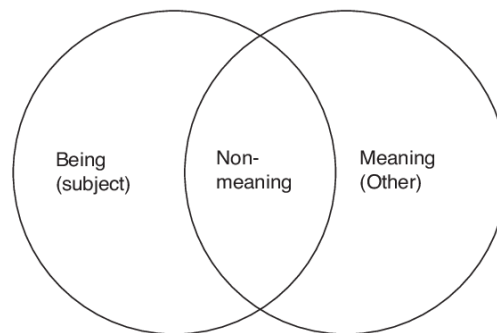


Figure 1: Lacanian Ethics and the Assumption of Subjectivity

This study was based on the theory of Shank. Shank’s theory concentrates on adolescents rather than youth since he discusses young people’s psychological state due to societal influences spanning from the beginning of puberty through maturity. His work is influenced by Freud’s (1959) study of group psychology, Lacan’s (1977) account of subject creation, and Jacqueline Rose’s cinematic explanations of imagined identifications based on concepts such as “the ideal ego and the ego ideal” (Shank, 1994). To summarize, Shank’s concept of scene honors Lacanian theory of subjectivity see Figure 1, according to which participants in the rock and roll music scene are motivated by narcissistic need.

Participants, as Shank indicates, want immediate pleasure and affiliation within a symbolically constructed society (Shank, 1994). Shank’s theory of scene, as Hesmondhalgh (2007) points out, is strongly

inspired by cultural studies (particularly, screen theory, which comes from cinema studies), which views sub (culture) as helpful. According to Hesmondhalgh, Shank's theoretical framework contrasts the dominant culture with the "interrogated, transgressed, or transformational" processes within the rock music scene that are linked with what Shank termed "libidinal excess" (2007). It is also worth mentioning that the impact of sub-cultural studies on Shank's theory of scene can be linked back to Bennett and Driver's (2015) claim that Shank's theoretical framework makes a distinction between "these transformational activities and the dominant or mainstream culture."

Straw (1991) expanded on Shank's work to define a scene as "a spectrum of musical practices coexisting, engaging with one other within a variety of processes of differentiation, and according to vastly varied trajectories of change and cross-fertilization." Straw (1991) identified the unique concept of the scene to the earlier notion of musical community: where the definition of the musical community consists of a stable demographic group whose participation in music is based on geographical, historical heritage. Similarly, the scene concept is defined as musical practices and cosmopolitan alliances inside an urban context. Although a scene may provide a "meaningful, exciting, thrilling, and validating feeling of community" (Futrell, Simi, and Gottschalk, 2006), the degree of dedication and involvement within music scenes are fluid rather than set. Participants in a music scene, as indicated by Harris (2000) and Hodkinson (2002), have varying degrees of dedication, ranging from 'tight-knit local music communities' to 'isolated artists and occasional fans': they all contribute to 'larger areas of musical practice' (Hodkinson, 2002).

In his article "Subcultures, scenes, or tribes? None of the above," Hesmondhalgh (2007) analyzed Straw's scene concept and demonstrated the contrasts between Shank's and Straw's approaches. While Straw concentrates on the spatial dynamics of popular music, particularly the transcending impact and changing nature of electronic dance music, Shank's approach is based on a local community that loves rock & roll. Straw considers 'processes of historical change happening within a broader worldwide music culture,' implying that the electronic music scene encompasses a range of 'local' or 'regional styles' beyond location restriction. Shank's scene concept focuses on the interactions of many music scenes inside a particular place, which Straw regards as "static and lacking in creativity."

According to Bennett and Driver (2015), Straw's work on the scene is important because it fills a vacuum in popular music studies by focusing on spatial dynamics without relying on subculture and community as a traditional framework. Bennett and Driver (2015) use Straw's arguments on local and trans-local elements of music scenes, as well as Bennett and Peterson's (2004) talks on virtualization of music scenes, to deploy a "three-layer model of the music scene" in their paper *Music Scenes, Space, and the Body*. The scene is addressed as a local, translocal, and virtual phenomenon in the 'three-layer model.' According to Bennett et al (2005), scene encompasses 'performance, production, marketing, promotion, and distribution' and virtual and non-virtual activities. Local scenes in this application include musical practices, cultural indicators, and lifestyles connected with a particular genre within a defined geographic region. The translocal scene is defined as "widely dispersed local scenes that are brought into regular contact around a unique type of music and lifestyle," which includes "temporary communities of music festivals" and "traveling music caravans." Virtual scenes use internet communication technology to establish a new environment where geographically separated music lovers and musical activities centered on a particular genre may connect, trade, and engage with one another.

In summary, various methods and theoretical frameworks have been established within popular music studies to use the word scene. The term has been extensively accepted beyond the work of Shank and Straw. Shank's method is insightful since it focuses on social constructions of identities motivated by psychological needs and tackles the transforming element of a particular urban music scene. However, this approach is still concerned with sub-cultural effects and fails to consider socioeconomic class among participants (Hesmondhalgh, 2007). Straw's approach to the scene and Bennett and Peterson's proposal of a three-tier model of the scene both serve as essential ideas for seeing popular music from various viewpoints and interpreting musical and cultural alliances with an emphasis on spatiality. However, as Hesmondhalgh (2007) suggests, the use of scenes has been "extremely imprecise" and "downright misleading." It not only has the term been used imprecisely by different researchers to merely imply musical practices associated with 'any genre within a particular locality without considering the 'politics of cosmopolitanism' involved in the concept, but it is also confusing in its holistic inclusivity.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Designs

This study utilized the ethnographic qualitative method. It is a qualitative method that addresses the ‘socially created character of reality, the close connection between the researcher and the subject of study, and the situational limitations that shape inquiry’ (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). Ethnography was used as a critical methodological approach to study Chinese subculture and online youth subculture in this research. The approach concerned people and culture in naturally occurring settings or ‘fields,’ which captures the social meaning of those being studied. Although ethnography has been defined through various understandings – as it develops over time and has been employed by various disciplinary contexts of anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, psychology, and human geography – the method is valued and has made a significant contribution to academic studies.

3.2 Respondents

There were selected youth respondents involved in this study to answers the significance of digital media in popular music and youth subculture for the young people.

3.3 Data method collection

Primary data will be the interviewed conducted and the secondary data will be gathered in academic papers available for internet and conventional study via the library. However, online resources will be used to understand and evaluate the subculture in online youth popular music community in china and its theory and discourse to ensure it aids in the intended research area and to gain knowledge in the theory, recent and past studies on how to make an effective and comprehensive activity in students.

4. Results and Analysis

4.1 Significance of digital media in popular music and youth subculture for the young people

To gather data on the significance of digital media in online popular music and youth subculture for the young people, the researcher asked some youth to answers the main questions in Table 1.

Table 1: Social Interaction and Online Popular Music Subculture

Respondents	Response
3	<i>“I feel it is significant for my social value and offer us innovative social interaction with the current popular music cultures which will draw our sense of adapting new technologies.”</i>
6	<i>“Many people see music as the pinnacle of art and civilization. Many individuals believe that music embodies their beliefs and preferences, as well as the values and tastes of others.”</i>
7	<i>“Online youth music is often a product of its era, serving as both a mirror of the memories.”</i>
9	<i>“Online youth music is often thought to have a unique connection. Music is provided and marketed to younger audiences, and most young people are lovers of one or more music genres.”</i>

Music scenes have expanded well beyond like-minded, identically dressed people dedicated to similar social ideas and musical trends in the internet era. According to Grazian (2005), these technological changes encourage greater creativity, innovativeness, autonomy, and power of individual cultural producers from the most casual fans to the taste-makers and sub-cultural capital producers of the blogosphere. According to many of these philosophers, Scenes are no longer constrained by borders, clothing, or sound. Instead, they have united in their opposition to the mainstream music business and mass media ideology. They have established a sub-cultural scene in which the fans entirely determine the sound. According to Ryan Moore, subcultures and their members now have more power than ever to interact with media and

participate in the production and distribution of cultural goods, transforming the independent music scene into a united entity directly combating the monopolistic tendencies of corporate media moguls.

Popular music had an undeniable effect on earlier generations, but the ever-expanding and varied means of access to popular music culture need urgent academic attention and makes this a very relevant study field.

Accordingly as some of the respondents responses in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Personality and Online Popular Music Subculture

Respondents	Response
1	<i>"I shaped my personality through listening to music and my school and work performances affect my self-identity."</i>
2	<i>"I like contemplative and sophisticated music like classical and passionate and rebellious music like rock music, but I hate cheerful and conventional music."</i>
5	<i>"Certain types of music that I like seem to reflect certain personality characteristics."</i>
8	<i>"Every day, I listen to my favorite type of music, and it has an effect on my personality."</i>
9	<i>"Online music is such an integral aspect of society and daily life that it has long been thought to be linked to my personality."</i>
10	<i>"Online music, more than any other medium, has a deep emotional connection with me: music conveys emotion, stirs memories, influences mood, and inspires creativity."</i>

Online youth popular music and the concept of subculture is continuously evolving with new trends, artists, fashions and followers using innovative tools like social networking services and always in the latest research in this field of study.

Table 3: Innovative Tools and Online Popular Music Subculture

Respondents	Response
2	<i>"I experienced these changes in popular music consumption; it influenced by new technologies intended to us and how much we use the music, our behaviors of listening and perceptions of the learning the celebrity music culture."</i>
4	<i>"I am investing much time in popular music and how big a part it portrays in my everyday schedule."</i>
5	<i>"The way individuals make music has evolved as a result of technological advancements. Composers may create cinematic soundtracks from the comfort of their own homes. Live streamed performances allow musicians to perform for fans all around the globe."</i>
7	<i>"Within the realm of music creation, technology is becoming more essential. Music of any genre that is recorded for the intention of sharing is created."</i>
8	<i>"They may use the internet to obtain music and then share it with their pals on various social media networks."</i>
9	<i>"Musicians may reach out directly to their followers through social media, which helps to build a stronger connection with them."</i>

With advancements in digital audio music downloads, quicker modems, and continuous Internet connection, popular music has become much more accessible. Peer-to-peer sharing on the internet, iTunes, which houses an extensive popular music collection with sales contributing to music charts, Spotify, which provides free access to popular music listening; and, most notably, YouTube, which allows free music video listening on a large scale, are a few examples of the growth in easy music downloads.

With this, the respondents agreed with the statement in Table 3.

The value that young people put on listening to music as often as they want is astounding. Music is an essential part of young people's daily lives. Young people wonder how much the development of new technologies has enabled a shift in how young people utilize popular music and how important it is to be

engaged in the current music scene.

While the commercial music industry uses a hierarchical framework to define the sound of popular music, fringe movements use a more planar structure that enables people to collaborate to make music for their pleasure. There is a shared space in the structure of fringe movements that does not exist in the corporate world.

Some of the respondents also shared his ideas regarding to the subculture in online youth popular music community: They stated in Table 4.

Table 4: Cultural Dynamics and Online Popular Music Subculture

Respondents	Response
1	<i>“Cultural identities are influenced by factors other than musical participation; they emerge from the standard norms that produced by the mainstream nowadays.”</i>
3	<i>“While music has the physical and metaphorical ability to convey a subculture's message, it typically communicates inside the scene.”</i>
6	<i>“While not all members of a scene can make music, the majority will be able to dress according to the group's standards and carry the message everywhere they go.”</i>
8	<i>““Music and youth are often thought to have a unique connection”</i>
10	<i>“Music is provided and marketed to younger audiences, and most young people are lovers of one or more music genres.”</i>

The outside world of popular music is equally essential in shaping a young people sense of connection to the mainstream as much as its distinctness from it.

This change in sub-cultural value, however, is not confined to individuals. Sub-cultural may also be applied to blogs, forums, and web pages, giving certain online groups a higher perceived worth than others. Digital media that provide more valuable information to the broader independent movement would naturally be held in more respect than those with less impact; similarly, online groups that have been for a longer length of time will be held in higher regard. As this shift demonstrates, the concept of authenticity is just as essential in online subcultures as it was in previous local and trans-local groups. The perceived authenticity associated with particular online communities and that associated with its members emphasizes the more comprehensive structure among online subcultures and serves to distinguish these communities from the mainstream.

5. Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine collective attitudes in defining the online youth popular music community as cultural phenomena. Additionally, to investigate the collective attitudes, norms, and values expressed via music by well-educated diasporic Chinese youth, it examined how sociological elements of comprehending the online youth music practices. It investigated how changed the youth's environment, life experiences, social connections, and emotional evocation influences the cultural practices of Chinese adolescents. It indicated that online youth popular music served as a critical event for youth in forming friendships and other social connections within their age cohort.

Subcultures within the online youth popular music community seem to be extremely compatible with rich media, online communities, and the development and replication of strong connections between communicators. Youth who do not identify as members of a subculture may want a high degree of control over the conditions surrounding their involvement in an online music community, as is the case with many non-musical online communities.

Acknowledgement

This study is funded by Research Project Supported by Shanxi Scholarship Council of China (2020-093).

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