

## **An Exploration into the Management Theory of Chinese University Student Music Groups**

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### **Abstract**

In the colleges and universities of China, various student associations emerge one after another. Among them, music groups are highly valued and concerned by university administrators due to their own professional characteristics. They are not only an important part of campus culture, but also undertake the management tasks of students in colleges and universities, such as “extracurricular activities” and music aesthetic education. Therefore, it is particularly important to do a good job in the management of music groups in colleges and universities. As far as the work task of the music groups is concerned, it mainly contains two parts: on the one hand, it supplements the relevant music knowledge for college students; on the other hand, it achieves the ultimate goal of managing students through the path of music aesthetic education. Quite different from the previous administrative management and social management, the management theory of student music groups must take into account the actual characteristics of college students. While achieving the purpose of “teaching one to fish is better than giving him fish”, it must also fully explore students’ love for music, so as to achieve the practical significance of coexisting education and management. As the dual identity of music educator and administrator of higher education in China, the author deeply understands the significance of combining education and management. In this regard, starting from the basic concept of Chinese student music groups, this paper intends to combine the actuality of students’ own development, and comprehensively explore a path that will meet the characteristics of the development of student music groups in colleges and universities in China in terms of education and management.

**Keywords:** student music group, educational attribute, management model

### **1. Introduction**

At present, with the vigorous development of higher music education in China, especially in the superior humanistic environment of comprehensive universities, student music groups have sprung up and become a relatively independent and important part of college student associations. Almost all colleges and universities offering music majors in China have their own student music groups. Among them, music groups such as choirs, orchestras (or symphony orchestras), set up as high as 100%, continuously play an important and active role and influence in the process of teaching and practice of music education in colleges and universities. Meanwhile, due to social and cultural construction and people’s demand for art appreciation, the exhibition space of student music groups in the society has been continuously expanded. In such a large environment, every university wishes to give its student music groups a higher display platform and achieve impressive results in various performances or competitions. To achieve these wishes, one important link cannot be ignored, namely the effective management of student music groups. With the rapid development of China’s education as a whole, higher education itself is not reluctant to lag behind, and invisibly and continuously strengthens and innovates talent training including music education in colleges and universities. Naturally, it has brought new opportunities and challenges to student music groups in colleges and universities. In this way, the exploration into its corresponding management theory is particularly important. In this regard, starting from the perspective of management, this research traces the management of college student societies, takes the management theory of college student music groups as the research object, and lays the theoretical foundation through literature

analysis, especially for the student development and organizational behavior, stakeholder and other theories benefiting this research. At the same time, it is precisely based on this premise, thus the massive collected documents will work. The information on the management of colleges and universities can be accumulated, including the management of music and art groups, and the information in the materials concerning some aspects of group management models can be sought and the research results of a certain number of experts and professors on management models can be drew on, so as to more effectively and deeply draw on and absorb the excellent experience and practices of college student music group management research.

### **2. Proposing Research on University Student Music Groups**

University student music groups belong to a kind of association, which is one of the important organizational forms of student music activities. At present, Chinese and foreign universities have conducted research on them from different perspectives. In 1989, the China Education Commission issued the General Program of Art Education for National Schools (1989-2000). From this, college music education began to develop on a large scale. Based on a survey and research, music majors were offered in 111 Chinese colleges and universities by the end of 1990. Based on the new problems faced by professional music education in colleges and universities, the management of university student music groups proposed in this article belongs to a new research focus in the management of college societies. Because college student music groups also have the general nature of student groups in colleges and universities, they are effective classrooms for cultivating the professional ethics and professional qualities for students majoring in music. The members of the groups have common professional interests and hobbies. Although the element of administrative organization and management is involved, that is, "being official", the spontaneity and stronger centripetal force, cohesion and appeal will be the best state for the development of college student music groups. In addition, the Chinese academic community temporarily lacks research in this area, so the specific concepts will be defined in the following discussion content. As the research on the management model of college student music groups is proposed for the first time, it should be started with the study on the management of college student associations, and then the corresponding conclusions on the management of college student music groups are drew. Based on the progressive approach, this research draws on the research results of college student associations, including music societies to explore the management model of college student music groups.

#### **2.1. Defining Concepts of Student Music Groups**

Student music groups are, first of all, a kind of society. Regarding the concept of society, the famous sociologist Weber once wrote in his book *Economy and Society* that "a society refers to a socially voluntary organization different from the state administrative agency and the compulsory institutions representing by it." In 1998, China's State Council promulgated the Administrative Regulations on the Registration of Social Organizations, in which Article 2 clearly stated that societies are non-profit social organizations that are formed voluntarily by Chinese citizens and carry out activities in accordance with their articles of association in order to realize the common wishes of their members. In 2005, the Provisions on the Administration of Students in Regular Institutions of Higher Education stated that "student societies are mass organizations organized voluntarily by students of the school."

Based on the above definitions, it is not difficult to find that a society is a social group based on the logical reasoning of the Chinese language. Weber defines it as a socially voluntary organization. If the research object is locked to the Chinese university student association, it is obvious that the definition of the Regulations on Registration and Administration of Social Organizations is the clearest. It can be seen that the definition of a group should be included in the definition of a society, rather than highlighting the social side, but its core content is to form voluntarily, achieve common will and carry out activities in accordance with the charter.

The difficulty of understanding the concept of "college student music group" lies in "student music group". This is a new title after all. The definition of Society has been analyzed above, and here is to distinguish it from the "student music society" commonly discussed by scholars, but the distinction between the two concepts is not complicated, that is, professionalism and non-professional differences. As Chinese universities compete to set up the music majors, student music groups have also begun to emerge in large numbers. Student music groups in colleges and universities are not a new thing created out of thin air, but the inevitable result of integrating the attributes of student music societies and social professional groups. What this research urgently needs to solve is the music group formed by students majoring in music, but it is necessary to put it in a music society which is formed by non-music majors to discuss it.

Based on the above analysis, the concept of the college student music group can be stated as follows: with the music major as a link, the groups are formed by colleges and universities based on their respective majors or hobbies, and independently carry out music practice or performance activities concerning corresponding

regulations. They are the embodiment of the “extracurricular activities” of professional music education in colleges and universities, possessing a certain professional nature.

## **2.2. Analyzing the Problems and Research Situation of Chinese University Music Groups**

In recent years, the number of Chinese college students’ music groups has increased rapidly, and there are various types of music groups. This trend of development urgently requires a perfect management model. However, judging from the current status quo, the management of most college student music groups in China still has many difficulties and problems. The research on the management of music groups in colleges and universities in China mainly centers on the graduation thesis and academic journals of masters and doctoral students, and the number is extremely limited. To achieve the purpose of studying the management model of music group for college students, the referred literature has to extend to the macroscopic research on the management of college student associations. The most important theoretical basis in the research process will be based on the authoritative discourse support of Chinese and foreign documents.

China’s research on the management of college student associations is quite consistent, and many aspects of the problems involved in student associations and suggestions for construction and development are relatively concentrated. For example, Yang Kaiyong first mentioned in *A Preliminary Study on the Management Methods of Student Associations in Colleges and Universities* that some associations in colleges and universities lack the value orientation which they should have, and the internal structure and accounts of some associations is very chaotic. The personnel entry and exit mechanism is useless and the cohesion is not strong. In addition, they also lack desirable stability, sufficient funds, space for club activities, ideas for community survival and development. And the structure of college students in the entire organization is unbalanced; Wang Wei pointed out in the *Analysis of the Status Quo and Development Ideas of Student Organizations in Chinese Colleges and Universities* that China’s colleges and universities should not only adhere to the construction and management, but also publish corresponding policies to encourage and regulate the operation of the associations, promote the healthy and upward development of students organizations; in the hope that they can play a more active role in the campus culture, so as to strengthen and improve the transformation of service-oriented universities and the ideological and political education for college students to make them play a greater role; Zhao Naipu and Liu Jian mentioned in their article *Student Organizations and Quality Education* that the benefits of student organizations can fully improve students’ professional knowledge in related fields, broaden their horizons and knowledge, develop and improve students’ personality in an all-round way, help students develop a sense of cooperation and democracy and accelerate their integration into society.

It is not difficult to see from this that the current problems exposed by college student organizations in China are the stability of the members, activity funds, and venues. At the same time, the thinking on construction and development is mainly to promote campus culture and strengthen ideological and political education, serve school development, improve students’ comprehensive ability, cultivate students’ sense of collaboration, etc. However, the thinking and exploration of the student music groups is also carried out in accordance with the general management method. In this way, the inherent uniqueness of its own is ignored, thus presenting a cookie-cutter society management model.

## **2.3. Case Study of Foreign Student Societies**

Relative to Chinese studies, foreign research on the management of student societies in colleges and universities is more comprehensive. Taking Western universities in the United States as an example, many universities have professional management organizations to manage student societies. The famous American scholar Henry Rosovsky has done a lot of research on American campus culture. The author summarized his point of view. The American Student Society is a social group that is active 24 hours a day. Students can publish their own articles in newspapers, or even publish newspapers themselves. They are also ready to participate in various student society activities. Student societies need all kinds of people, such as poets, singers, rugby players, and political leaders. The influence of some student societies in developed countries such as Europe and the United States has even spread to the society and the entire country. Alexandra Robbins’ book *Secrets of the Tomb* detailed the history, activities and social influence of the most famous and influential student society in the United States, “Skull and Bones”, Based on detailed history, the society has cultivated many outstanding talents for foreign universities. In addition, in 2007, Kwon et al. proposed a “reference design model” theory, which is mainly closely connected with the management system of Korean college student associations. This theory adopts a strategic method of classifying and managing the information of college student societies, which is an effective means to safely complete tasks in the application of information security management systems. Meanwhile, it also lays a unique theoretical foundation for the practical application of the college student society management system.

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Summarizing the above research results of foreign experts and scholars, it is not difficult to see that the college student society system has been studied in depth abroad, and the research results are relatively fruitful. In fact, these good management models can play an important role in leading and stimulating the management of student music groups in China's colleges and universities.

### 3. Educational Attributes of Student Music Groups

The student music group itself has an important educational attribute and is another form of implementing school aesthetic education. Guided by the theory of pedagogy, it explores the educational ideas of students, educators, and educational rules respectively, being an research on clarifying the essential attributes of student music groups.

#### 3.1. Student-oriented Education

##### 3.1.1. "Student Developmental Theory"

This theory is gradually established and developed from the educational practice of American universities in the 1960s and 1970s. It is related to many aspects of student affairs management. The management of student associations is naturally indispensable. Therefore, this theory is also one of theoretical base of student society management in American universities. Related to the "student affairs management" in the United States at that time, "student developmental theory" usually refers to the theory of student self-management and development based on students themselves. This kind of management method is conducive to the separation of professional teachers from the tedious school work to engage in professional teaching. In the modern Chinese student management work, although there are also a group of professionals engaged in student work, if more attention is paid to student participation in related work, it will not only arouse the initiative and enthusiasm of students, but also exercise their own abilities, so as to promote their all-round development and improvement of comprehensive capabilities.

Efforts to improve the management of college student societies can also promote the learning and development of college students to a higher level in a certain sense. The management of college student societies has become an important part of student affairs. There are many examples of universities in other countries applying the theory of student development to the management of student associations. These research results can provide the best model for the management of student music groups in Chinese universities, thereby enriching the connotation of university student music group management, and further promoting the practical exploration into the management theory of Chinese college student groups and providing valuable management experience of college student music groups.

##### 3.1.2. Student Participation Theory

Similar to the "student developmental theory", the "student participation theory" also attaches great importance to student self-management. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has issued a public declaration that "higher education workers and students should give full play to their main roles, and leaders of the state and institutions of higher learning should pay attention to the actual needs of university students and regard them as important partners in higher education innovation, which should be regarded as a central task ." The master's thesis of Fan Huijun has an appropriate expression of the theory of student participation. In the thesis, she pointed out that "student participation theory covers student participation in school services, decision-making management and many other aspects. The participation of students in management is an important indicator of evaluating the management level of universities and implementing the student-centered educational philosophy. Student participation in management actually discusses students' self-education, self-service and self-management abilities. This is also the issue of talent training and service quality improvement, and is the law of development that colleges and universities should follow ." These expressions also provide new ideas for the management of college student music groups.

#### 3.2. Educator-oriented Education

The theory of higher education management and control is also a combination of two concepts. Among them, higher education management refers to the process by which higher education administrators consciously regulate the management process and organizing resources inside and outside the higher education system based on their educational goals and educational development laws to achieve their desired goals. This emphasizes the management of higher education in the content of higher education management; higher education control refers to an effective process to analyze and correct deviations between actual operations and initial goals and plans from the observation point of the initial plan standards and goals of the higher education system, so as to ensure that the goals and results can be achieved smoothly. The focus is on the technical micro-control of higher education through legislation, policies, financial appropriations and macro-control of relevant government

functional departments. The research on the management model of college societies must be fully integrated with control theory through higher education management to make it consistent with the development law and overall goals of higher education. In addition, the management procedures and organizational resources of student societies need to be regulated, and a model for effective society activities should be formed, so as to achieve the goal of physical and mental development for college students, providing another theoretical support for exploring the management model of music groups in colleges and universities.

### **3.3. Laws of Education-based Education**

The key to the “theory of laws of higher education development” is to grasp the two laws. Professor Pan Maoyuan, the founder of Chinese Higher Education, edited the first Higher Education as early as the 1980s, during which he proposed two laws of the development of higher education. In 2007, it was reiterated in an interview with a reporter from China Education News.

As the founder of Chinese Higher Education, Professor Pan Maoyuan repeatedly emphasized the law of higher education development. It can be seen that China has neglected the law of external or internal relations in the development of higher education. Based on this theory, this study aims to promote the physical and mental development of college students, so that they can develop in all aspects. Under the new situation, the pace of China’s higher education reform and exploration is constantly deepening, and the society’s demand for the cultivation of talents in colleges and universities is also increasing. As the “extracurricular activities” of professional music education in colleges and universities, student groups should also be innovated and improved in the management model, which can meet the actual needs of China’s higher education development in the new era.

## **4. Management Model of Student Music Groups**

There is no fixed explanation for the concept of Management. With the development of the environment and objects of management, its concept is constantly improving, more appropriate to summarize the management connotation of the corresponding stage. Taylor, the father of management, simply named the original concept of Management as knowing exactly what you let others do, and making them do it in the best way. Until 1998, Lewis, Goodman and Fandt jointly pointed out that Management refers to the activities that effectively control and coordinate resources and manage to achieve the set goals. For the first time, the Management concept is based on organizational resources. It is believed that the objects of management include all the resources that can be used, including human resources.

The concept of Management Model is obviously a composite definition of Management and Model. The concept of Management has been clarified above. The interpretation of Model in China’s Modern Chinese Dictionary is “a standard paradigm for something, or a standard paradigm that can be imitated.” Then the concept of Management Model can be collectively referred to as the formation of an authoritative, practical and applicable standard form by the stakeholders of the university student music groups exercising their functions and using various resources under the guarantee of a complete system in the process of smoothly achieving organizational goals.

### **4.1. Target Management Model**

The Goal Management in the usual sense mainly refers to a practical management technique and system. Both management parties need to strictly control themselves through standardized behaviors in order to achieve preset goals. Drucker has thoroughly studied the essence of management, proposed the objective management theory, and emphasized the objective management theory that fully integrates rational management and human-oriented management. Another name for this management model is “management in management”, and its most prominent feature is to focus more on the establishment and realization of the artificial index system.

Therefore, the management of college student music groups combines the theory of goal management to achieve the purpose of encouraging group performance activities by setting a series of goals, so as to guide the behavior of the group members to make the individual expectations and goals consistent, and to determine the corresponding goals based on the expectations, mobilize the enthusiasm and creativity of the members, and finally realize the overall goals set by the school administrators.

### **4.2. Governance Theory Model**

Some Western countries have started to develop governance theory since the 1980s, expanding from government governance to multiple fields, including university governance, and forming multiple governance models. Chinese scholars began to pay attention to governance theory in the late 1990s, mostly from the perspective of government governance.

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Regarding the applicability of the governance theory of university music groups, this research focuses on the views of diversity of subjects, consistency of goals, process interaction and coordination in the master's thesis by Li Manji. "Governance theory" emphasizes the guiding role of students. In the management of student music groups, it focuses on the guidance and lead of the development ideas of the groups. It can be said that governance theory originates from government management and is related to public affairs management. The application to student management can be instructive to student music groups for direction.

### 4.3. Organizational Behavior Theory

Organizational behavior is an intersecting and marginal subject, which focuses on multi-disciplinary communication and interaction. To specifically apply to the management of student music groups, that is, the organization and behavior management of the group is required to have a background of multi-disciplinary communication and practical application value. There are various definitions of organizational behavior. Stephen P. Robbins (1997), a famous American expert and scholar, once proposed that "organizational behavior can actually become a separate research field and its research scope is mainly on the relationship between individual, group and other factors and the internal behavior of the organization. Then, the effectiveness of the organization is improved by using knowledge."

The application of this theory in college student societies is mainly based on the research results of an expert and professor, Wang Qingjun. Music groups are also important student organizations in colleges and universities. To achieve an effective management model through scientific management, music groups must follow organizational behavior theory, coordinate the relationship between college music schools, music groups, instructors, and group members, and mobilize the enthusiasm of group members, so as to achieve the management goals of college student music groups.

### 5. Conclusion

College student music groups have initially formed a certain scale in China, but they are still in the process of gradual improvement in group management. Certainly, there are many student music groups that have developed to perfection during this period, becoming the example of other student music group development. Judging from the theoretical basis of the research on college student societies by Chinese scholars, it has covered all aspects of current college talent training links. Whether in horizontal expansion or vertical extension, the management research of college student societies has been steadily placed in a broad space. Thus, the theoretical research on the management of college student societies has been effectively improved. At the same time, judging from the current status of research in China and abroad, it is not difficult to see that although the status quo highlights the deficiencies in the management of college student societies, the gratifying point is that each deficiency can always have corresponding solutions and make the deficiencies and problems in group management be easily solved within the theoretical category. In short, college student music groups have the general attributes of student organizations, and they are also adaptable to the theoretical basis of student organization management, but the strong professional characteristics of student music organizations in colleges and universities determine the differences in influencing factors at all levels. Therefore, when exploring the management theory of college student music groups, only by closely focusing on the goals, systems, resources, actors and other relevant factors of the student music groups, and following the actual characteristics of the students, can a set of characteristic theory of student music group management suitable for colleges and universities in China be finally formed.

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