IMPACT OF CULTURAL AUTHENTICITY AND AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT ON GLOBAL APPRECIATION OF YIYANG TUNE: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF EMOTIONAL RESONANCE AND THE MODERATING ROLE OF INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Crossref

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Traditional Chinese performing arts, such as the Yiyang tune, face increasing difficulty maintaining global relevance as cultural experiences move into digital and intercultural environments. Although authenticity and online participation are widely discussed, empirical research explaining how these factors shape emotional and appreciative responses among international audiences remains limited. This study addresses this gap by examining how the cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations and digital audience engagement influence emotional resonance and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune. The study uses primary survey data collected from 290 international students in China via convenience sampling, and the data were analyzed with Smart PLS 4 to evaluate reliability, validity, direct relationships, mediating effects, and moderating effects using a structural equation modeling approach. Results indicate that cultural authenticity significantly predicts emotional resonance (p = 0.001) and international appreciation (p = 0.009). Digital audience engagement also shows significant positive effects on emotional resonance (p = 0.000) and international appreciation (p = 0.004). Emotional resonance further predicts appreciation (p = 0.006). Mediation analysis shows that emotional resonance mediates the effects of authenticity (p = 0.038) and digital engagement (p = 0.016) on appreciation. Intercultural sensitivity significantly moderates the relationships between authenticity and emotional resonance (p = 0.009), digital engagement and emotional resonance (p = 0.019), and emotional resonance and appreciation (p = 0.000). These findings show that emotional resonance acts as a central mechanism linking cultural authenticity and digital engagement to international appreciation, while intercultural sensitivity strengthens these relational pathways.

INTRODUCTION

Traditional forms of performing arts are essential carriers of cultural transmission, identity, and memory. However, many forms often struggle to hold relevance and regard in a world that is increasingly globalized and digitized (Xu, 2021). The Yiyang tune from China is one of the operatic genres that has historically represented such tension. As global audiences increasingly engage with diverse cultural expressions, understanding how they exercise aesthetic appreciation is an interesting scientific question (Wang et al., 2021). Recent work has emphasized that cultural performance is not a site bound by geographies; instead, transnational engagement with traditional arts, theatre, and music is often mediated by digital technologies and intercultural sensibilities (Niu, 2022). Nevertheless, while cultures are increasingly global, we lack sufficient empirical evidence on the impact of cultural authenticity and digital audience engagement on the Yiyang tune's capacity to elicit emotional responses and foster international appreciation (Yue, 2016).

This study's scientific problem was grounded in the growing recognition that cultural appreciation is a complex social and psychological process (Liu et al., 2022). Global audiences engage with cultural performance through an amalgam of emotional, perceptual, and experiential methods, influenced by their intercultural life experiences (Fan & Ip, 2022). Cultural psychology research confirms the centrality of emotional resonance as a mediator and catalyst in appreciating artistic expression across cultures, enabling audiences to experience it even when they lack prior knowledge of the cultural

underpinnings (Kuang & He, 2022). Simultaneously, as the performing arts continue to migrate to digital spaces, audience engagement through participation, interaction, sharing, and co-creation becomes a significant factor in shaping cultural value and the global visibility of cultural performances (Li et al., 2022). However, existing research has rarely modelled all these elements together to develop an explanatory model, particularly for traditional Chinese musical heritage.

Furthermore, cultural authenticity, the extent to which a performance maintains recognizable cultural markers, has been a strength for researchers expecting trust, emotional desire, and cultural understanding (Wang & Webb, 2025). For international audiences, who may be assumed to have no prior knowledge, authenticity can serve as a cognitive anchor, promoting appreciation and reducing cultural distance (Li, 2024). Consider the Yiyang tune previously provided, in which authenticity is both artistic and a symbolic representation of Chinese cultural identity (Zhang & Negus, 2024). However, this literary foundation has not reached consensus on how authenticity is moderated by emotional response and digital identity in audience experiences at the global level.

Compounding considerations are intercultural sensitivity, which moderates how the audience interprets cultural information. Evidence from various sources indicates that those with higher intercultural competence show greater sympathetic responses, linear engagement, and a positive, approach attitude toward unfamiliar cultural artefacts (Wang, 2025). This suggests that intercultural sensitivity may both amplify and dampen the effects of authenticity and engagement on emotional resonance and appreciation (Cao et al., 2025). Meanwhile, the literature on an evidence base on this moderating mechanism, while suggested in previous literature, exists in an empirical vacuum in the realm of traditional music scholarship (Shen, 2023).

The objective of this study was to assess the potential influence of cultural authenticity and digital audience engagement on emotional resonance and global appreciation of the Yiyang tune, while considering emotional resonance as a mediator and intercultural sensitivity as a moderator. To investigate these interconnected dynamics, the present study employs a quantitative approach using Smart PLS 4 structural modelling approach. In line with these scientific concerns, this study aims to develop and validate an integrated model explaining how authenticity and digital engagement contribute to emotional and appreciative responses to the Yiyang tune among international audiences. This goal contributes to the larger aim of cultural sustainability: understanding how traditional arts can remain significant within an interconnected world.

The article is then structured into four sections. The literature review synthesizes the current research regarding cultural authenticity, digital audience engagement, emotional resonance, and intercultural sensitivity. The methodology section elaborates on the sampling process, variables, and analytical procedures. The results section presents measurement and structural model results, followed by a discussion of their theoretical and practical implications. The paper concludes with a summary of contributions, limitations, and implications for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

People from different cultures perceive the music of other cultures differently, depending on their emotional attachment (Li et al., 2025). It is critical to understand how culture shapes perceptions of music to improve the association between music and its benefits for the mind. When music is performed critically, drawing on cultural songs, its presentation can be enhanced, helping people from different cultures develop an emotional attachment to it (Blasco-Magraner et al., 2021). A clear perception of and authenticity in the culture are also helpful for the public to develop significant behaviors regarding cultural understanding. The artistic value of music becomes particularly important for international audiences, where perceptions of the culture matter greatly (Fraser et al., 2021). In this regard, the Yiyang tune presentation is considered an essential factor in influencing the public's emotions and behaviour (Granot et al., 2021). Regarding the integrity of music and people's emotional attachment, the presentation of music is necessary to influence people's subjective understanding of it across different cultures.

The appreciation of music by international audiences improves when they have a subjective understanding of one culture and its values (Saarikallio et al., 2020). The performance of art, such as music, is based on different qualities, and the presentation of music has become a significant factor in influencing international audiences. It reflects the authenticity of the culture and how it can be improved to present music more effectively (Athanasopoulos et al., 2021). While music is considered an essential factor in cultural representation, the art of presenting music to the appropriate audience with appreciation is necessary to reflect cultural understanding (Rehfeldt et al., 2021). In this case, when the presentation of music is tailored to the public's subjective experience and appropriate level, it shapes their behaviour in music learning and performance. Meanwhile, the presentation of music can be considered a more decisive factor in shaping people's perceptions and artistic behavior when encountering music from different cultures (Song & Yuan, 2021). Chinese music has values and cultural representations that are attractive to international audiences and foster appreciation for musical art.

Audience engagement on digital platforms in advancing music cultural representation strengthens their emotional attachment to the music (Ortony, 2021). When the audience has a different set of values and perceptual behaviors related to music, their advancement in music integrity is evident in their developing strong attitudes toward music performance in their subjective understanding (Er et al., 2021). On digital platforms, digital audience engagement advances the music presentation that is necessary for significant music development in modern times. Meanwhile, the emotional resonance of music and digital audience engagement can lead to higher-quality music production and a stronger attachment to the people (Fan & Ip, 2022). When music is produced with quality and integrity, audience engagement increases through emotional attachment to the music and appreciation of the art (Gómez-Cañón et al., 2023). Therefore, digital streaming and platform-

based music should be improved to enhance their presentation and attract more audiences to wider music participation events.

Digital audience engagement is a necessary factor in international music, where online platforms enable participation in concerts (Keltner et al., 2022). However, digital music has become a significant factor in international appreciation because people from different cultures and communities can access it. Access to digital platforms for music-related understanding and gratitude can improve the presentation of music on social media, which has large audiences representing diverse demographics and cultures (Salakka et al., 2021). A significant change in digital audience engagement can improve the appreciation of music, where the quality of presentation is necessary. It is a factor that enables audience engagement on a large platform, where they can access music-related information and participate in the concert online (Nag et al., 2022). However, the limited level of audience participation in music and audience engagement on online platforms reduces the productivity of music and its international appreciation (Cao et al., 2025). People from different cultures and languages can understand the music with appropriate tone and quality (Li et al., 2022). Therefore, it has become necessary for the international audience to engage in music activities that allow the public to celebrate more effectively on social media and other digital platforms.

The emotional attachment to music helps concerts grow into large-scale events attended by many people who are starting to celebrate their cultural values (Kuang & He, 2022). The emotional attachment to music helps international appreciation of music, which contributes to significant advancement in music-related behaviour. However, the emotional attachment to music is also necessary for the development of a global attitude toward music, which can strengthen emotional attachment among people from different cultures (Zheng & Leung, 2021). Appreciation of culture is possible through music, where audiences from different localities can access it and express their emotional attachment to it. However, the international level concerned with music required audience emotional engagement with the cultural values and the quality of the music (Foster Vander Elst et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the emotional resonance also helps develop significant behaviors towards music, which can support the public in developing appropriate attitudes towards music performance as art (Li, 2022). On the other hand, if the emotional resonance is not firmly attached to the music, intertextual appreciation of music can be developed more effectively, with emotional resonance considered a priority factor in art performance.

Emotional resonance is considered a significant factor in reflecting culture because people are emotionally engaged with cultural values (Váradi, 2022). It is a necessary factor where people can have different levels of cultural values and understanding that reflect the authenticity of the culture. The presentation of music appropriately can improve cultural awareness and international appreciation of culture (Kivimäki et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the authenticity of culture shapes the presentation of music, reflecting cultural values to a higher level for an international audience. The global audience is highly associated with cultural music when they are emotionally attached to understanding cultural values (Nummenmaa et al., 2021). However, the emotional resonance and international appreciation of music enhance cultural authenticity when people are emotionally attached to it (Liu et al., 2023). In this way, the presentation of music with high-quality feelings can improve the audience's engagement with the music (Zhang & Negus, 2024). Therefore, emotional resonance is considered a significant factor in music participation and involvement.

Emotional resonance is a necessary factor for audience engagement in music concerts and presentations (Ruokonen et al., 2021). The public is highly associated with online platform-based music concerts, where they can easily access music from any culture and celebrate it. However, the digital audience's level of engagement with the music and its emotional resonance becomes significant when cultural and international appreciation of the music is prioritized to develop it better (Fuentes-Sánchez et al., 2022). Meanwhile, audience engagement through cultural associations can advance music participation, enabling people to gain better access to music values on digital platforms (Fan & Ip, 2022). In accordance, digital audience engagement at the international level becomes essential for the global appreciation of music, where emotional attachment to the music is considered a priority (Monroy & Keltner, 2022). Therefore, emotional resilience is a significant factor in digital audience engagement and international appreciation of music.

Intercultural sensitivity related to any culture and its values is an essential factor in cultural authenticity and perceptions of that culture (Yang & Welch, 2022). It has become a crucial factor in modern times, as audiences can engage on digital platforms to celebrate the music of a culture. Sensitivity to cultural values and perceptions of other cultures is necessary to develop meaningful public behavior during music events (Liu et al., 2022). Meanwhile, emotional resonance is considered a significant factor in intellectual sensitivity and in the cultural values with which participants connect on digital platforms (Shengdong, 2016). The emotional resonance connects the public from different localities and geographies into a shared culture where they can celebrate music of higher quality with a deeper understanding of the culture. It has become an essential factor, as the digital audience engages with music quality and activity, and the perception of music is a necessary factor for international participation (Laukka & Elfenbein, 2020). The significant attitude toward developing music quality and attachment to music is based on the public's intellectual ability. Therefore, a substantial level of intercultural sensitivity is required when the public agrees to the cultural values of other countries (Taruffi, 2021). Based on the above studies, the mediating role of emotional resonance and the moderating role of intellectual sensitivity were not examined in prior research. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the relationships among the variables while analyzing the moderating role of intercultural sensitivity and the mediating role of emotional resonance. Based on the above gaps, the study was conducted to test the following hypotheses.

H₁: There is a relationship between the cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations and emotional resonance.

H₂: There is a relationship between the cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations and the international appreciation of Yiyang tune.

H₃: There is a relationship between digital audience engagement and emotional resonance.

H₄: There is a relationship between digital audience engagement and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune.

H₅: There is a relationship between emotional resonance and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune.

H₆: Emotional resonance mediates between the cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations and the international appreciation of Yiyang tune.

H₇: Emotional resonance mediates between digital audience engagement and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune.

H₈: Intercultural sensitivity moderates the relationship between cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations and emotional resonance.

H₉: Intercultural sensitivity moderates the relationship between digital audience engagement and emotional resonance.

H₁₀: Intercultural sensitivity moderates the relationship between emotional resonance and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune.
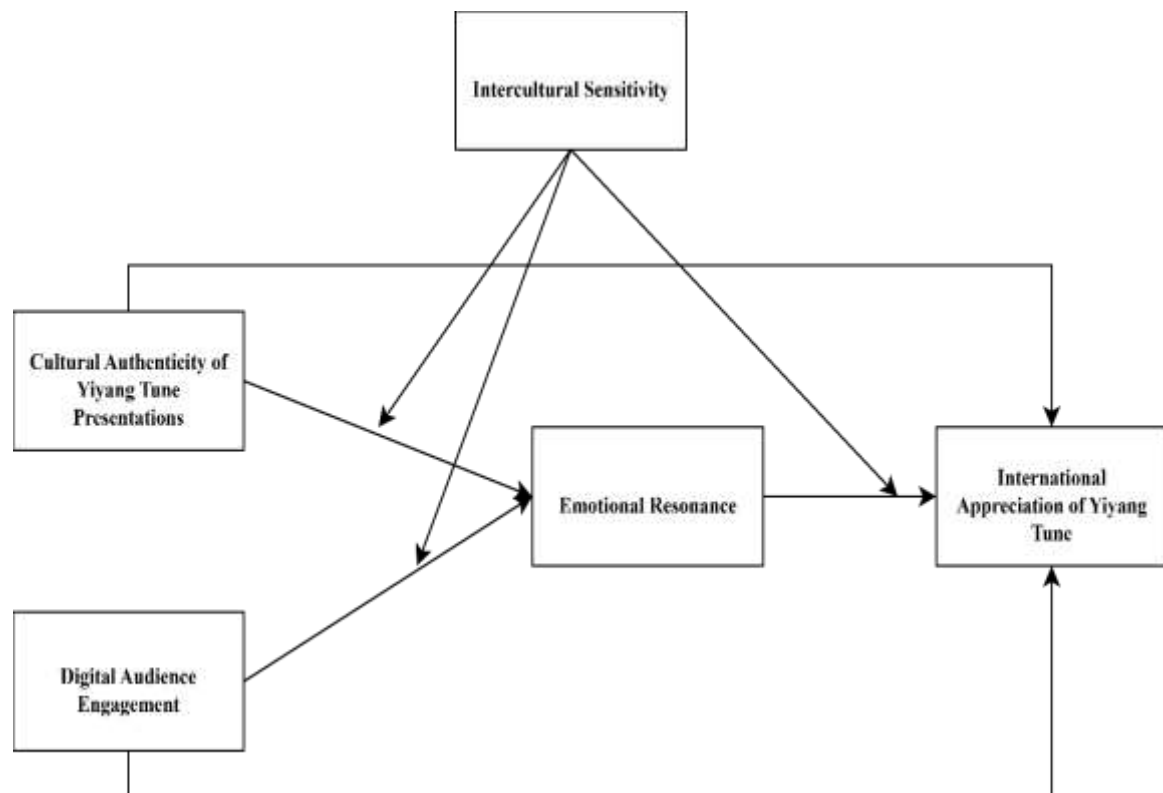
The study's model is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Research Framework

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used primary data, with participants contacted to collect the data. However, variables of this study were operationalized according to the nature of the research. Since the participants in this study were international students in China, the variable cultural authenticity of the Yiyang tune presentation was operationalized to examine how international students perceive it across different cultures. Furthermore, the variable digital audience engagement was operationalized to investigate how digital audiences matter in fostering emotional resonance.

Third, the variable emotional resonance was operationalized as the extent to which international students show emotional attachment to the Yiyang tune. Meanwhile, the variable international appreciation of Yiyang tune was operationalized to understand how international student in China perceives Yiyang tune. Finally, the moderating variable, cultural sensitivity, was operationalized to examine how global culture is sensitively perceived in the context of art.

The study population was international students at different Chinese universities. However, a convenience sampling method was applied to collect the data. This method was used because participants in this study were contacted after providing informed consent. Since there was no database access to information about the potential participants, the study avoided using random sampling for data collection. However, the study distributed 400 questionnaires, of which 290 were usable for data analysis.

The analysis of the collected data was performed after confirmation of data normality. The study found that the mean value and standard deviation of the data were appropriate for analysis. Furthermore, the study confirmed that no

skewness and kurtosis-related issues were found in the data. Accordingly, the study investigated the outliers, but no univariable or multivariate outliers were found in the data. Hence, it was confirmed that the sample of 290 respondents was appropriate to analyze the data.

RESULTS

The study investigated the demographic data at the first stage of this research. Since the participants in this study were international students in China, the study found that 55% of the data were from males and 45% from females. Furthermore, the study found that 20% of the respondents were aged 18-25 years, 44% were aged 26-35 years, 29% were aged 36-45 years, and the remaining 7% were aged 46 years and above.

In accordance, the study asked a screening question about the experience of the Yiyang tune performance, and all respondents (100%) confirmed they had experienced it. Finally, the study asked about the frequency of exposure to traditional Chinese performance per year. The findings reported that 29% of participants were exposed 1-2 times per year, 56% were exposed 3-5 times, and 16% were exposed more than 5 times per year. The findings of demographic variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographics

Variable	Level	Counts	Proportion
Gender	Male	159	55%
	Female	131	45%
Age (Years)	18–25	57	20%
	26–35	128	44%
	36–45	85	29%
	46 and above	20	7%
Have you ever experienced a Yiyang Tune performance (live or digital)?	Yes	290	100%
Frequency of exposure to traditional Chinese performances (per year)	1–2 times	83	29%
	3–5 times	162	56%
	More than 5 times	45	16%

The data for this study were analyzed using measurement model assessment. This method was used to assess convergent validity and the internal reliability of the study's items. In this study, Smart PLS 4 was used to determine the measurement model assessment (see Figure 2). Initially, the reliability of individual items was assessed, and all instruments achieved a reliability of 0.60 or higher (Hair et al., 2011). Hence, all items achieved the threshold for individual items' reliability. Furthermore, the study used convergent validity indicators, and Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were found to be above 0.70 (Hair et al., 2011). Hence, the study confirmed that convergent validity was significantly achieved. The multicollinearity assessment of the data was also checked. The variance inflation factor (VIF) was checked to verify the absence of multicollinearity (VIF < 3.3). The results confirmed that the data were significant, and no multicollinearity issues were found. Hence, the study reported that convergent validity and multicollinearity were acceptable (see Table 2).
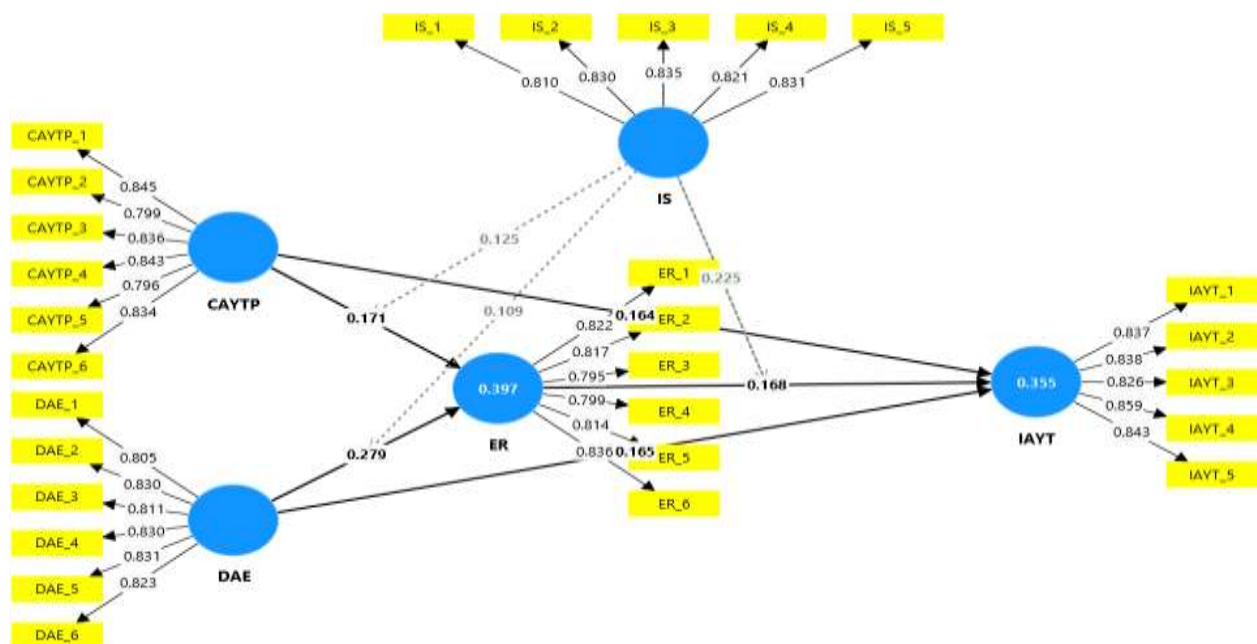
Note. CAYTP = cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations, DAE = digital audience engagement, ER = emotional resonance, IAYT = international appreciation of Yiyang tune, and IS = intercultural sensitivity

Figure 2. Measurement Model

Table 2. Convergent Validity and Multicollinearity

Construct	Indicators	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted	VIF
CAYTP	CAYTP_1	0.845	0.907	0.908	0.682	2.406
	CAYTP_2	0.799				2.050
	CAYTP_3	0.836				2.358
	CAYTP_4	0.843				2.436
	CAYTP_5	0.796				2.040
	CAYTP_6	0.834				2.338
DAE	DAE_1	0.805	0.904	0.905	0.675	2.147
	DAE_2	0.830				2.263
	DAE_3	0.811				2.173
	DAE_4	0.830				2.341
	DAE_5	0.831				2.260
	DAE_6	0.823				2.190
ER	ER_1	0.822	0.898	0.903	0.662	2.160
	ER_2	0.817				2.139
	ER_3	0.795				2.084
	ER_4	0.799				2.046
	ER_5	0.814				2.050
	ER_6	0.836				2.228
IAYT	IAYT_1	0.837	0.896	0.898	0.707	2.264
	IAYT_2	0.838				2.249
	IAYT_3	0.826				2.127
	IAYT_4	0.859				2.385
	IAYT_5	0.843				2.325
IS	IS_1	0.810	0.884	0.891	0.681	2.050
	IS_2	0.830				2.028
	IS_3	0.835				2.183
	IS_4	0.821				2.185
	IS_5	0.831				2.025

Note. CAYTP = cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations, DAE = digital audience engagement, ER = emotional resonance, IAYT = international appreciation of Yiyang tune, and IS = intercultural sensitivity

Accordingly, the study investigated discriminant validity with the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) method. According to scholars, the HTMT values for all variables in the HTMT matrix must be less than 0.85 to indicate significant discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015). Hence, the study found substantial discriminant validity, with the data considered significant and without issues. The findings in Table 3 indicate that the HTMT values for all variables were less than 0.85.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

Construct	CAYTP	DAE	ER	IAYT	IS
CAYTP					
DAE	0.441				
ER	0.491	0.554			
IAYT	0.491	0.484	0.487		
IS	0.481	0.471	0.515	0.436	

Note. CAYTP = cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations, DAE = digital audience engagement, ER = emotional resonance, IAYT = international appreciation of Yiyang tune, and IS = intercultural sensitivity

The study analyzed the data for structural model assessment. This method was performed using PLS Bootstrapping with 5000 subsamples (Hair et al., 2011). Hypothesis testing was performed, and a t-value threshold of 1.96 was used to indicate significant relationships (see Figure 3). The findings of H_1 confirmed a significant relationship between the cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations and emotional resonance (t = 3.220, p = 0.001). Furthermore, H_2 stated that there is a significant relationship between the cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations and international appreciation of Yiyang tunes (t = 2.625, p = 0.009). H_3 found a substantial relationship between digital audience engagement and emotional resonance (t = 5.031, p = 0.000). Meanwhile, H_4 reported a significant relationship between digital audience engagement and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune (t = 2.864, p = 0.004). Accordingly, the H_5 findings reported a relationship between emotional resonance and global appreciation of the Yiyang tune (t = 2.769, p = 0.006). The findings are presented in Table 4.
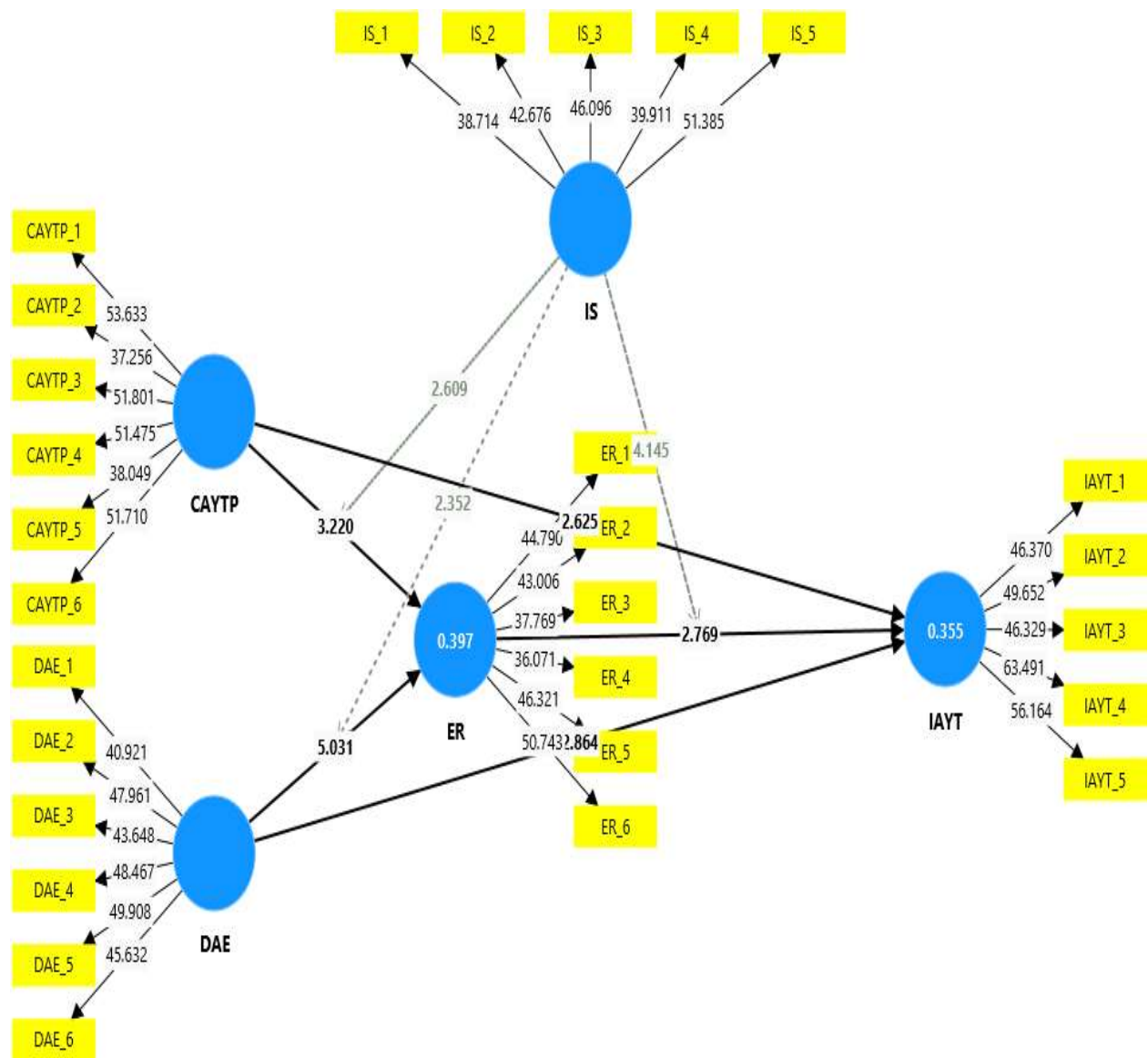
Note. CAYTP = cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations, DAE = digital audience engagement, ER = emotional resonance, IAYT = international appreciation of Yiyang tune, and IS = intercultural sensitivity

Figure 3. Structural Model

Table 4. Direct Paths

Hypothesis	Direct Paths	Original sample	Sample mean	Standard deviation	T statistics	P values
H_1	CAYTP -> ER	0.171	0.172	0.053	3.220	0.001
H_2	CAYTP -> IAYT	0.164	0.164	0.063	2.625	0.009
H_3	DAE -> ER	0.279	0.279	0.055	5.031	0.000
H_4	DAE -> IAYT	0.165	0.167	0.057	2.864	0.004
H_5	ER -> IAYT	0.168	0.168	0.061	2.769	0.006

Note. CAYTP = cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations, DAE = digital audience engagement, ER = emotional resonance, and IAYT = international appreciation of Yiyang tune

Furthermore, the mediating and moderating hypotheses were tested, and the findings are reported in Table 5. H_6 found that emotional resonance positively mediates between the cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations and international appreciation of Yiyang tune (t = 2.071, p = 0.038). In accordance, H_7 stated that emotional resonance positively mediates the relationship between digital audience engagement and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune (t = 2.416, p = 0.016).
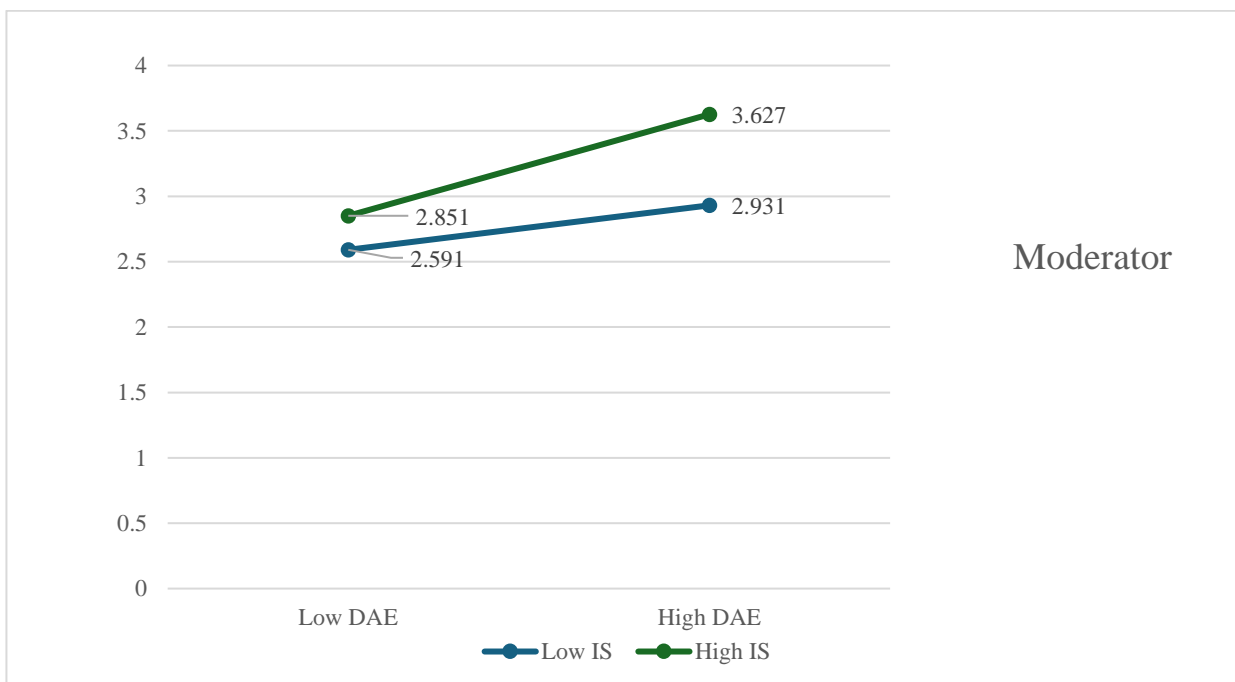
Meanwhile, the findings for H_8 indicated that intercultural sensitivity positively moderates the relationship between the cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations and emotional resonance (t = 2.609, p = 0.009). According to the results, displayed in Figure 4, the presence of the moderating variable, intellectual sensitivity, strengthens the relationship between the cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations and emotional resonance.
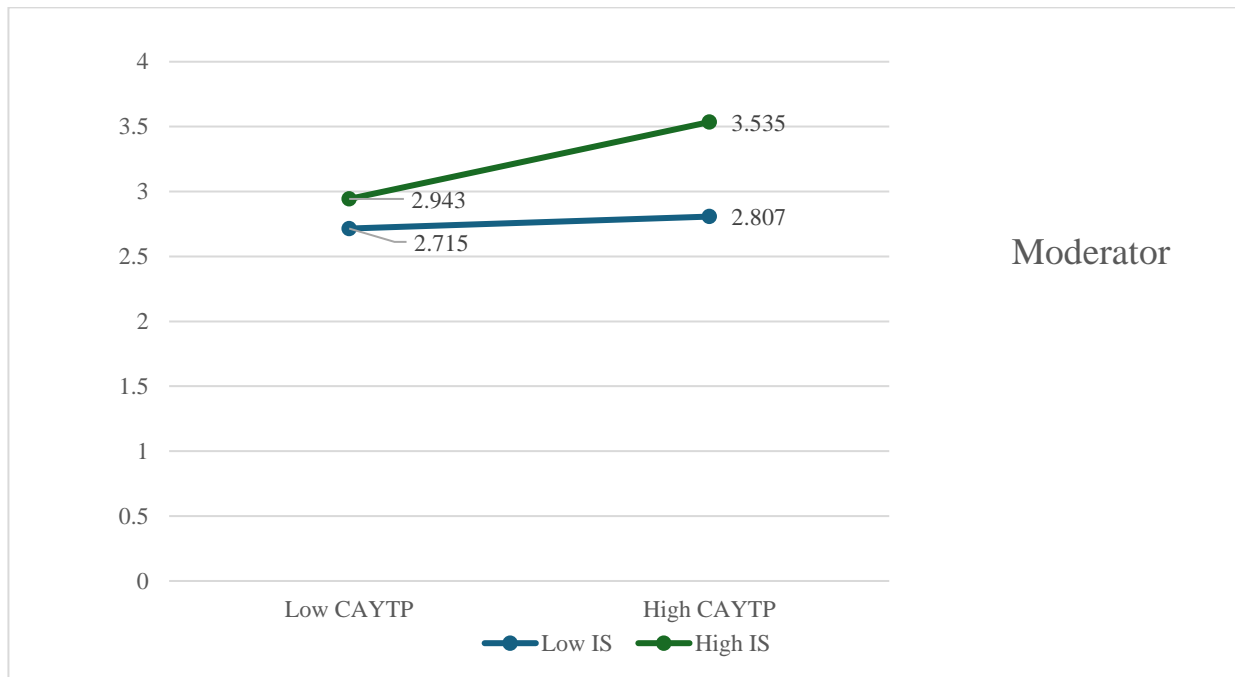
Note. CAYTP = cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations, ER = emotional resonance, and IS = intercultural sensitivity

Figure 4. Moderating Relationship 1

Moreover, H_9 reported that intercultural sensitivity positively moderates the relationship between digital audience engagement and emotional resonance (t = 2.352, p = 0.019). According to Figure 5, the moderating variable, intellectual sensitivity, strengthens the relationship between digital audience engagement and emotional resonance.


Note. DAE = digital audience engagement, ER = emotional resonance, and IS = intercultural sensitivity

Figure 5. Moderating Relationship 2

Finally, the findings of H_{10} indicated that intercultural sensitivity positively moderates the relationship between emotional resonance and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune (t = 4.145, p = 0.000). According to the results, displayed in Figure 6, the presence of the moderating variable, intellectual sensitivity, strengthens the relationship between emotional resonance and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune.
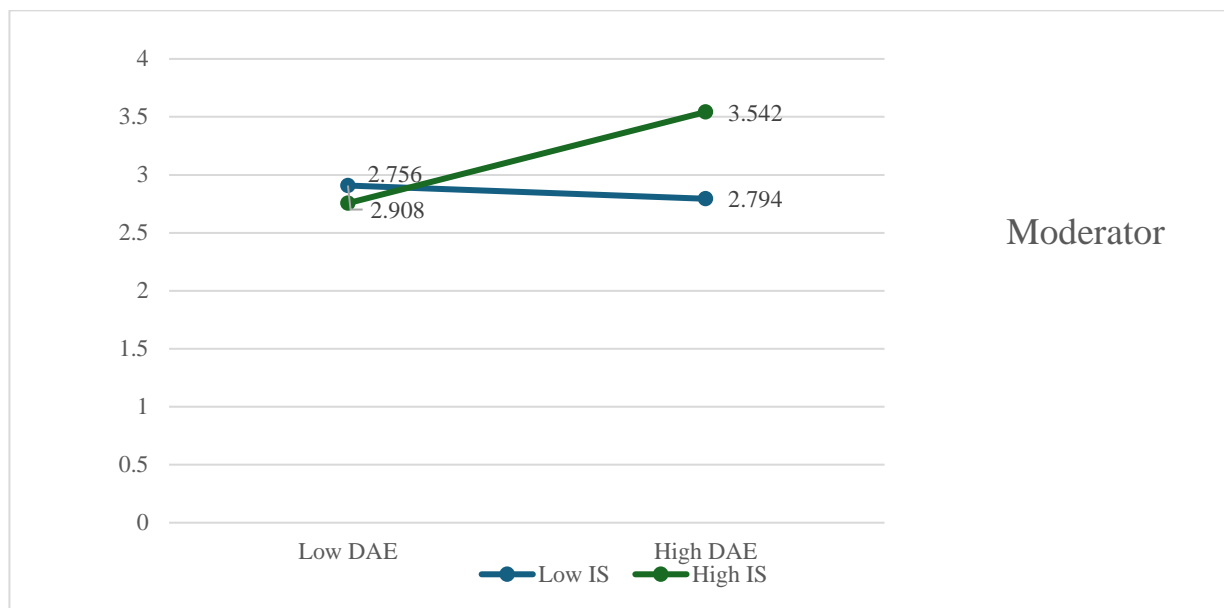
Note. ER = Emotional Resonance, IAYT = International Appreciation of Yiyang Tune, and IS = Intercultural Sensitivity

Figure 6. Moderating Relationship 3

Table 5. Mediating and Moderating Paths

Hypothesis	Mediating and Moderating Paths	Original sample	Sample mean	Standard deviation	T statistics	P values
H_6	CAYTP -> ER -> IAYT	0.029	0.029	0.014	2.071	0.038
H_7	DAE -> ER -> IAYT	0.047	0.047	0.019	2.416	0.016
H_8	IS x CAYTP -> ER	0.125	0.125	0.048	2.609	0.009
H_9	IS x DAE -> ER	0.109	0.110	0.046	2.352	0.019
H_{10}	IS x ER -> IAYT	0.225	0.222	0.054	4.145	0.000

Note. CAYTP = cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations, DAE = digital audience engagement, ER = emotional resonance, IAYT = international appreciation of Yiyang tune, and IS = intercultural sensitivity

The study further confirmed the coefficient of determination (R2). It was confirmed that the independent variables could explain the variance in the dependent variable. According to scholars, R2 values of 0.67 are substantial, 0.33 are moderate, and 0.19 are weak (Cohen, 1992). The findings of this study showed that both emotional resonance and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune were moderate, as indicated by the independent variables. The findings of the coefficient of determination are reported in Table 6.

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination

Construct	R-square	R-square adjusted
ER	0.397	0.387
IAYT	0.355	0.344

Note. ER = emotional resonance, and IAYT = international appreciation of the Yiyang tune

The study further investigated the effect size to confirm the extent to which independent variables affect the dependent variable. According to scholars, an effect size above 0.2 is small, above 0.15 is medium, and above 0.35 is large (Cohen, 1992). The findings on effect size (f2) reported in Table 7 confirmed that the cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations has a negligible effect on emotional resonance and international appreciation of Yiyang tunes. The study also confirmed that digital audience engagement has a negligible impact on both emotional resonance and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune. At the same time, the study found that emotional resonance also has a negligible effect on international appreciation of the Yiyang tune. The effect sizes are reported in Table 7.

Table 7. Effect Size

Construct	ER	IAYT
CAYTP	0.034	0.028
DAE	0.094	0.028
ER		0.028

Note.CAYTP = cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations, DAE = digital audience engagement, ER = emotional resonance, IS = intercultural sensitivity, and IAYT = international appreciation of Yiyang tune

Lastly, this study performed an analysis of predictive relevance. This analysis aims to determine the model's predictive power. According to scholars, predictive relevance is significant when Q^2 is greater than 0 (Hair et al., 2011). The study found that the Q^2 value for the dependent variable was 0.239, accounting for 23% of the model's variance. Hence, the model in this study demonstrated significant predictive power and can be used in future studies.
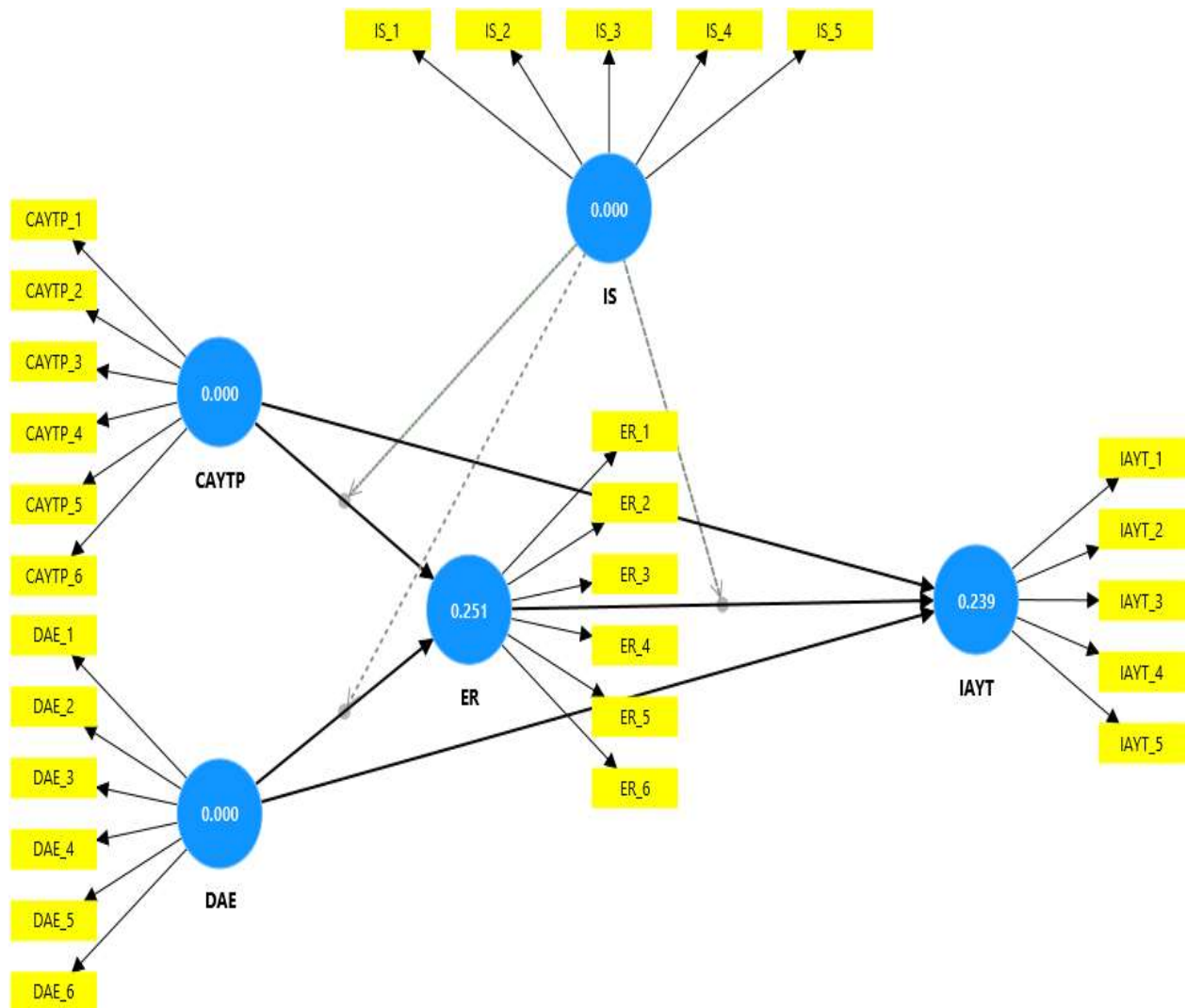
CAYTP = cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations, DAE = digital audience engagement, ER = emotional resonance, IAYT = international appreciation of Yiyang tune, and IS = intercultural sensitivity

Figure 7. Predictive Relevance

Table 8. Predictive Relevance

Construct	SSO	SSE	Q² (=1-SSE/SSO)
CAYTP	1740.000	1740.000	0.000
DAE	1740.000	1740.000	0.000
ER	1740.000	1303.678	0.251
IAYT	1450.000	1103.708	0.239
IS	1450.000	1450.000	0.000

Note.CAYTP = cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations, DAE = digital audience engagement, ER = emotional resonance, IAYT = international appreciation of Yiyang tune, and IS = intercultural sensitivity

DISCUSSIONS

The results of H_1 confirmed a significant relationship between the cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations and emotional resonance. The findings of H_1 were consistent with those of Salakka et al. (2021), who noted that cultural authenticity was a significant contributor to emotional resonance and cultural value. Further, according to Váradi (2022), when it becomes authentic, the presentation of cultural values is vital, no matter the form it takes, including music. Finally, Li (2022) pointed out that the cultural authenticity of music presentation has a positive relationship with emotional resonance to the culture.

Furthermore, H_2 stated that there is a significant relationship between the cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune

presentations and the international appreciation of Yiyang tune. Gómez-Cañón et al. (2023) also stated that the cultural authenticity of musical presentation is a factor in the public's appreciation of musical quality. At the same time, Athanasopoulos et al. (2021) highlighted that public participation in music events increases as music is presented across different cultures. According to Fraser et al. (2021), the international audience highlights cultural values and appreciates other nations' cultures when the public is motivated to perceive them as such.

H_3 found a significant relationship between digital audience engagement and emotional resonance. According to Ortony (2021), the digital engagement of the audience with cultural values on digital platforms is increased when they are emotionally connected with it. At the same time, Nag et al. (2022) stated that emotional engagement can lead the public to connect with the cultural values of people in other countries. Meanwhile, Song and Yuan (2021) reported that digital engagement of the audience with the music event increases the authenticity of the music.

Meanwhile, H_4 reported a significant relationship between digital audience engagement and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune. Blasco-Magraner et al. (2021) stated that digital audience engagement improves audience engagement with music culture. At the same time, Granot et al. (2021) reported that the quality of musical development leads to audience adjustment, with the digitalization of music being positively perceived. However, Rehfeldt et al. (2021) stated that when international music is not celebrated online, audience engagement with international music is reduced.

Accordingly, the H_5 findings reported a relationship between emotional resonance and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune. The study by Keltner et al. (2022) found that emotional resonance is a critical factor in international music appreciation when the audience is from different cultures. However, Er et al. (2021) stated that emotional resonance is a key factor in engagement with music and publics when emotionally connected, helping to appreciate the music. Laukka and Elfenbein (2020) also supported this research's findings, stating that emotional resonance is a significant factor in music engagement.

H_6 found that emotional resonance positively mediates between the cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations and international appreciation of Yiyang tunes. The study by Ruokonen et al. (2021) found that emotional resonance becomes a key factor in connecting the public across cultures when they participate in music events. However, the study by Kivimäki et al. (2021) found that when the public is emotionally connected to music, they show positive behaviour during music engagement. Fuentes-Sánchez et al. (2022) also supported this study's findings, noting that cultural engagement and music perception are key factors in digital engagement with music.

In accordance with H_7, emotional resonance positively mediates between digital audience engagement and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune. Niu (2022) stated that emotional resonance is a critical factor in advancing audience digital engagement with music performance. At the same time, Yang and Welch (2022) reported that when emotional resonance is high, the tune is appreciated by international audiences. Taruffi (2021) also highlighted that music performance is always accepted when digital acceptance of the music improves, and public perception of the music develops positively.

Meanwhile, the findings of H_8 reported that intercultural sensitivity positively moderates the relationship between cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune presentations and emotional resonance. Wang et al. (2021) reported that intercultural sensitivity is significant for the public's emotional connectivity in music from different cultures. Moreover, Nummenmaa et al. (2021) stated that when music culture is developed positively, the sensory understanding of music is increased with international participation. The study by Xu (2021) found that the connectivity of music to an intercultural audience increases the presentation of art and music with emotional resonance.

Moreover, H_9 reported that intercultural sensitivity positively moderates the relationship between digital audience engagement and emotional resonance. Liu et al. (2023) asserted that when audiences are digitally engaged with music, intercultural sensitivity plays a positive role. However, Zheng and Leung (2021) noted that audience engagement at the digital level enhances intercultural harmony and satisfaction with the music. At the same time, Saarikallio et al. (2020) reported that appreciation of digital music engagement increases when emotional resonance is considered critical to music connectivity.

Finally, the findings of H_{10} reported that intercultural sensitivity positively moderates the relationship between emotional resonance and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune. Monroy and Keltner (2022) stated that intercultural association with music enhances musical performance and develops positive behaviour among global audiences, enabling them to enjoy the music. Meanwhile, Foster Vander Elst et al. (2021) noted that when music is celebrated by audiences from different cultures, public understanding of the music is positively developed. In line with this, Li et al. (2025) reported that international experience in music enhances cultural values and connects people with an artistic attitude.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research was to explore the influence of the cultural authenticity of Yiyang tune performances and digital audience engagement on emotional resonance and international appreciation of the Yiyang tune, as well as the mediating role of emotional resonance and the moderating role of intercultural sensitivity. Overall, the study provides empirical support for the effects of authenticity and digital engagement on emotional resonance and appreciation of the Yiyang tune among international audiences, underscoring how cultural and technological factors can shape global perceptions of traditional art forms.

The study yielded a few key findings. First, cultural authenticity and digital audience engagement had a significant positive impact on emotional resonance and international appreciation, validating their roles in shaping audience perceptions. Second, emotional resonance was a meaningful mediator of both predictors (authenticity and digital

engagement) and global appreciation. Third, intercultural sensitivity was a meaningful moderator of both predictors (authenticity and digital engagement) on emotional resonance, and emotional resonance on appreciation. These findings shed light on the layered psychological and cultural processes involved in cross-cultural artistic appreciation.

The original contribution of this paper is the construction of an integrated model that incorporates cultural, emotional, digital, and intercultural variables to explain international audience appreciation for a traditional art form. The model shows how these independent variables work together dynamically, differing from previous studies, and creates a fuller picture of behaviour when looking at a world audience. The paper significantly enriches the literature on arts appreciation by applying this integrated model to the Yiyang tune, an underexplored yet culturally rich musical form.

The study makes significant theoretical contributions by extending the cross-cultural arts appreciation theory, which holds that emotional resonance serves as the link between cultural presentation and the audience's perceptual gaze. From a practical perspective, the findings offer specific recommendations for action for artistic practitioners, arts organizations, and digital platform managers. Increasing authenticity throughout performances, examining digital methodologies for engagement, and creating culturally diverse communicators are all essential ways to improve international appreciation. Lastly, educators could offer intercultural grounding for global audiences in manifold ways, such as cultural-embedded story arcs in education, providing scholarly contextual knowledge, or digital productions in multiple languages that expose audiences to the work and build emotional connections to traditional art forms.

Nevertheless, several limitations should be recognized. The sample was comprised solely of international students in China and may not expand to a global audience. Self-reported measures are susceptible to response bias. In addition, the research included only one traditional art form, limiting our ability to generalize the findings. Future research can broaden our understanding by analyzing different audience groups across multiple countries, using diverse conventional art forms, and employing longitudinal or experimental designs to examine shifts in appreciation over time. Adding a qualitative dimension may also provide a richer understanding of how audiences make meaning of authenticity and emotional experiences across different cultures.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Measuring instruments

Variable	Items
Cultural Authenticity of Yiyang Tune Presentations	The Yiyang Tune performance I viewed maintained its traditional cultural characteristics.
	The presentation reflected genuine elements of Chinese heritage.
	The performance stayed true to its historical and regional origins.
	The costumes, music, and language used were culturally authentic.
	The performance represented fundamental aspects of Chinese culture.
	The Yiyang Tune presentation avoided excessive modernization, which would have diluted its tradition.
Digital Audience Engagement	I actively interacted with Yiyang Tune performances on digital platforms.
	I shared or commented on online content related to Yiyang Tune.
	I participated in live chats or forums discussing Yiyang Tune.
	The digital presentation made me feel more connected to the performance.
	I found digital platforms effective in promoting my engagement with Yiyang Tune.
	I often revisit Yiyang Tune's online content to learn more or experience it further.
Emotional Resonance	The Yiyang Tune performance evoked strong emotions in me.
	I felt emotionally connected to the performers.
	The music and story of the performance deeply moved me.
	I could relate personally to the emotions expressed in the Yiyang Tune.
	The performance stirred feelings of joy, nostalgia, or empathy.
	I felt a lingering emotional impact after watching the performance.
Intercultural Sensitivity	I enjoy learning about cultures different from my own.
	I can easily adapt when interacting with people from other cultures.
	I am open-minded toward unfamiliar cultural traditions.
	I respect differences in cultural values and practices.
	Understanding cultural differences helps me enjoy international performances more.
International Appreciation of Yiyang Tune	I recognize the artistic value of Yiyang Tune in a global context.
	Yiyang Tune deserves wider international recognition.
	I recommend Yiyang Tune performances to non-Chinese audiences.
	I consider Yiyang Tune an essential part of world cultural heritage.
	Yiyang Tune can foster intercultural understanding.