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Regional Cultural Communication and Business Model of Shengqi Dipingxian: A Case Study of a Sino-Kazakh Co-produced Music-Travel Variety Program

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Abstract: The integrative innovation of music and cultural tourism has emerged as a major developmental trend in the contemporary cultural industry. Taking the Sino-Kazakh co-produced music-travel variety program Shengqi Dipingxian as a case study, this article systematically examines its mechanisms of regional cultural communication and commercial operation logic. Drawing on literature reviews, case studies, textual analysis, and practice-based observation, this study offers an in-depth analysis of the program's symbolic construction, narrative strategies, and cross-cultural translation practices. Furthermore, the Business Model Canvas is employed to analyze nine dimensions of the program, including its value proposition, revenue streams, and key resources. The findings indicate that the program constructs a distinctive Silk Road cultural symbolic system through its strategic selection of locations, international participants, and multilingual repertoire. It achieves cross-cultural emotional resonance through a narrative framework integrating field research and cultural immersion with musical competition. In cross-cultural translation, the program adopts strategies like free translation and functional allocation, embodying principles of functional equivalence. Commercially, it utilizes a cooperative structure of overseas investment, Chinese production, and global sharing, relying primarily on advertising sponsorship and platform copyright licensing. Given its high cultural value but limited direct-to-consumer traffic, this study recommends deepening policy-based cooperation and promoting knowledge asset transformation for sustainable development. This research provides theoretical and practical implications for the cultural communication and commercial operation of integrated music and tourism programs.

Keywords: music programs; cultural tourism; cross-cultural communication; business models; cultural industry

Received: 18 February 2026

Revised: 08 April 2026

Accepted: 21 April 2026

Published: 25 April 2026



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1. Introduction

Against the backdrop of the upgrading of global cultural consumption and increasing industrial convergence, the music + cultural tourism model has evolved from an experimental innovation into an important engine for regional economic development and cultural communication. In recent years, a number of variety programs using music as a connective medium and travel as a representational vehicle have moved beyond the confines of the traditional studio. Through what may be termed itinerant music-making, these programs have integrated artistic expression, the presentation of regional culture, and tourism promotion into a tripartite structure [1].

The program examined in this study, Shengqi Dipingxian, emerged precisely within this broader trend as a forward-looking project [2]. Positioned as the first Sino-Kazakh jointly produced music variety program for Silk Road cultural exchange, the program centers on a model in which a transnational team of musicians engages in cultural fieldwork and musical competition in countries along the Silk Road. The program was simultaneously broadcast on Hunan TV and Mango TV beginning on 5 February 2026,

and was aired concurrently on Kazakhstan National Television. By the eighth episode, its total online communication volume had reached 1.59 billion impressions; it ranked first in ratings among provincial satellite television channels in the same time slot for eight consecutive weeks; and it was recommended and reported on by more than 500 media outlets, including People's Daily. During my internship with the production team of Shengqi Dipingxian, I was deeply involved in song selection and the review of multilingual lyric translations, which enabled me to observe from an internal perspective the process by which the music + cultural tourism model was transformed from concept into text. This experience provides the present study with first-hand materials and an empirical point of entry.

This study seeks to systematically deconstruct the innovative model of Shengqi Dipingxian, with significance at both the theoretical and practical levels [3]. Theoretically, it attempts to expand the boundaries of arts management research and to test the applicability of such theories as cross-cultural communication and cultural geography within the domain of mass entertainment products. Practically, it aims to provide an internal perspective that may assist production teams in optimizing content design and balancing artistic expression with commercial demands, while also offering reference points for the development of similar projects. The originality of this study is manifested in two respects. First, it adopts an integrated analytical framework driven by the dual dimensions of cultural communication and business model, thereby establishing a connection between cultural value and industrial value. Second, by drawing on an internally grounded empirical perspective based on internship experience, the analysis gains both practical relevance and empirical depth.

In line with these objectives, the study addresses the following questions: What is the internal narrative logic of the program's model of transnational field research + musical competition + travel documentary? How does the program achieve the reactivation of Silk Road culture through the selection of cast members, locations, and songs? Is its business model sustainable and scalable? What optimization strategies can be proposed on the basis of practical observation?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

The rise of music and cultural tourism variety programs is the result of the combined effects of media convergence, consumption upgrading, and the mutual penetration of industrial boundaries [3]. Such programs are no longer merely entertainment products; rather, they have evolved into complex cultural phenomena and economic activities. This chapter aims to systematically review domestic and international studies on innovation in music variety programs, the mediated communication of regional culture, and the business models of cultural tourism initiatives, in order to clarify the relevant theoretical trajectory and identify the point of departure and research space for the present study [4].

2.2. The Evolutionary Trajectory and Innovative Trends of Music Variety Programs

The evolution of Chinese music variety programming has undergone multiple stages, ranging from celebrity performance, to amateur talent shows, and then to professional competition and scenario-based narration. Overall, its development has exhibited a tendency toward vertical specialization, immersive experience, and value enhancement. Within this trajectory, purely competitive music formats have become insufficient to satisfy the deeper needs of audiences [5]. Music must therefore be more closely integrated with broader stories, concrete settings, and rich cultural connotations. Against this backdrop, music + travel has emerged as an important innovative subtype, whose core characteristic lies in its reconstruction of cultural geography through spatial narrative. It liberates musical performance from the enclosed studio and embeds it within real natural and human landscapes, enabling viewers to engage in an immersive decoding of local cultural-tourism scenery through musical performance.

Zhang Na further summarizes the deeper logic of this transformation as a dialectical unity of boundary-breaking and root-returning. On the one hand, such programs break through formal and industrial boundaries by integrating multiple genres such as documentary and reality television, linking online and offline media, and connecting with the cultural-tourism industry. On the other hand, their success remains rooted in ethnic-cultural traditions and universal human emotional needs. Shengqi Dipingxian takes Silk Road culture as its spiritual foundation and employs transnational field research and competition as a boundary-breaking strategy, thus representing a frontier practice of this concept. Furthermore, the interactivity and fragmented dissemination characteristic of the new media environment have technologically driven transformations in program form, encouraging the production of more topical content and formats better suited to multiscreen viewing. This development has further facilitated the rise of outdoor travel formats that combine strong visual appeal with a high potential for topic generation [6].

2.3. Studies on the Cultural Communication Mechanisms of Music + Cultural Tourism Programs

How such programs effectively mediate the communication of regional culture has become a focal concern in academic research. Existing scholarship mainly revolves around three interrelated dimensions: symbolic construction, narrative strategy, and cross-cultural adaptation.

At the level of symbolic construction and the presentation of place imagery, such programs package and represent cultural symbols such as local landscapes, sounds, and folk customs through audiovisual means, with the aim of constructing a distinctive and perceptible sense of place [7]. Relevant studies have shown, for example, that the modern television encoding of such symbols as grasslands, Nadam fairs, and long-song traditions can successfully shape a new regional image. Likewise, presenting the original environments in which music is generated is regarded as a key path toward more authentically conveying the connotations of ethnic culture.

At the level of narrative strategy, effective cultural communication cannot be separated from narrative design capable of eliciting emotional resonance [8]. Research has shown that *Infinity and Beyond* constructs collective memory and reinforces cultural identity through such devices as intergenerational golden-song performances and street interviews, while the creation of ritualized scenes of collective singing and sharing can consolidate viewers' sense of cultural belonging from the perspective of communication-as-ritual. The field research and cultural immersion segment designed in *Shengqi Dipingxian* is intended precisely to gather local stories and infuse subsequent musical performances with a more concrete and emotionally compelling narrative core.

At the level of cross-cultural communication, when a program involves transnational cultural dissemination, coping with cultural discount becomes a central challenge. Studies indicate that music, as a bridge for cross-cultural communication, can connect the life stories of different groups, yet appropriate visual interpretation and contextual explanation remain necessary in order to reduce barriers to understanding. Music-travel documentaries can evoke emotional resonance and achieve cross-cultural emotional transmission through a fusion narrative of ethnicity and homeland. From a theoretical perspective, cultural dimensions theory, which addresses differences in values, and functional equivalence theory, which guides the transformation of cultural symbols, provide important frameworks for analyzing and designing cross-cultural communication strategies.

2.4. Business Models and Paths of Industrial Integration in Music + Cultural Tourism Programs

Business-model innovation constitutes the core guarantee of the sustainable development of such programs. Existing research has mainly discussed this issue from three interrelated dimensions: value-chain extension, IP operation, and industrial linkage [9].

With regard to diversified revenue structures and commercial model construction, studies have pointed out that the music + cultural tourism model has moved beyond the

path dependence of traditional variety programming on advertising and copyright revenues. Instead, it increasingly realizes value through diversified approaches such as customized travel routes, e-commerce for local specialty products, and offline concerts [7]. In this regard, the Business Model Canvas offers an effective tool for deconstructing the business model of such programs.

In terms of IP operation and industrial-chain extension, long-term IP management beyond the monetization of the immediate broadcast constitutes a key mechanism for the sustained amplification of value. From the perspective of cultural capital theory, the cultural capital accumulated through content innovation can be systematically transformed into economic capital and social capital [10]. Successful programs may further extend into such areas as offline concerts and study-tour products, thereby generating a long-tail effect.

At the level of industrial linkage and social value, such programs can exert a comprehensive driving effect on regional economies. As cultural ignition points, music variety programs can enhance destination visibility, stimulate coordination between culture and tourism, and foster local cultural pride and community cohesion, thereby producing social benefits.

2.5. Literature Review and Positioning of the Present Study

Taken together, the existing literature provides a solid foundation for this study, yet there remains substantial room for further development. First, the forward-looking quality of research objects remains limited. Most studies focus on already broadcast and successful cases, while there is a lack of systematic research on projects such as Shengqi Dipingxian, which are characterized by innovative features such as Sino-Kazakh co-production and transnational field research. Second, existing analyses often lack integration: some emphasize textual analysis from the perspective of cultural communication, whereas others prioritize logical deduction from the standpoint of business models. Studies that organically combine these two dimensions remain relatively rare. Third, insufficient attention has been paid to the front end of content production. Current research tends to focus on the finished broadcast product, while the planning stage—especially the core creative processes of song selection, adaptation, and cross-cultural lyric translation—has not been adequately examined [11].

Accordingly, this study takes Shengqi Dipingxian as its point of entry in an effort to address these gaps. By integrating the dual perspectives of cultural communication and business management, and by incorporating the author's practical observations from the front line of content planning, the study offers a systematic deconstruction and evaluation of the program's innovative model, with particular attention to its communication strategies and business-model construction in a cross-cultural context [1]. In doing so, it seeks to generate new reflections for the theoretical development and practical innovation of this type of program.

3. Research Design

3.1. Research Object

The central object of this study is the music-travel variety program Shengqi Dipingxian. Jointly produced by Hunan TV and Dimash Studio, the program began simultaneous broadcast on Hunan TV and Mango TV on 5 February 2026, while also airing concurrently on Kazakhstan National Television. Marketed as the first Sino-Kazakh jointly produced music variety program for Silk Road cultural exchange, the program features a model of full overseas shooting, on-site cultural immersion, and musical competition. It invites eight musicians from six countries—China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Malaysia, and Italy—to travel across four Kazakhstani cities—Turkistan, Aktau, Almaty, and Astana—over a span of 22 days for cultural fieldwork and musical competition.

Three reasons justify the selection of this program as the case study. First, it is highly representative. The program exemplifies the latest trend in integrative innovation

between music and cultural tourism and constitutes a typical sample through which to observe this model. Second, it is distinctive [12]. As a Sino-Kazakh co-production, the program possesses pronounced features of transnational communication and offers rich material for the study of cross-cultural communication. Third, it is accessible. During my internship with the production team, I participated deeply in early-stage content planning, including song selection and the review of multilingual lyric translations, thereby accumulating first-hand materials that provide the study with an internal perspective.

3.2. Research Methods

This study employs the following five methods in combination [13].

First, the literature review method is used to systematically examine domestic and international scholarship on the evolution of music variety programs, the cultural communication of music combined with cultural tourism, and business models, thereby constructing the theoretical foundation of the study. Particular attention is paid to theoretical tools such as encoding/decoding, functional equivalence, and the Business Model Canvas.

Second, the case study method is applied to conduct an in-depth deconstruction of *Shengqi Dipingxian* as a single case, focusing on its cultural communication mechanisms and business model. Throughout the analysis, attention is paid to placing program practice in dialogue with theoretical frameworks to avoid superficial description [13].

Third, the textual analysis method is used to interpret the program proposal, competition-song texts, multilingual lyric translations, and the broadcast episodes themselves, with a view to analyzing the construction of cultural symbols, narrative strategies, and cross-cultural translation practices [9].

Fourth, the practice-based observation method is employed on the basis of my internship experience with *Shengqi Dipingxian*. Through participant observation of the front end of content production, such as song selection and lyric-translation review, I obtained first-hand qualitative materials concerning internal creative decision-making [14]. This method provides the study with a distinctive empirical foundation.

Fifth, the questionnaire survey method is adopted to supplement data on cultural communication effects and consumption intentions from the audience perspective. An online questionnaire was designed and distributed to viewers who had watched *Shengqi Dipingxian* [15]. It primarily investigated the following dimensions: audience cognition and identification regarding the program's cultural symbols, acceptance of cross-cultural content, changes in interest in Silk Road tourism after viewing, and willingness to consume program-related derivative products. The questionnaire was distributed through channels such as the program's official Weibo super-topic page, fan communities, and forums for music enthusiasts.

As of 22 April 2026, a total of 92 valid questionnaires had been collected [16]. Respondents were predominantly young people aged 18–25 (approximately 78%), which is consistent with the characteristics of the program's core audience. The main findings are as follows.

With respect to viewing behavior and motivation, 32.6% of respondents had watched at least one full episode, 24.0% had watched clips or promotional trailers, 28.3% had heard of the program but did not know much about it, and 15.2% had never heard of it. The top three reasons for watching were liking Dimash or other program guests (41.3%), curiosity about the music and travel format (34.8%), and an interest in music variety programs (28.3%). By contrast, only 19.6% reported an interest in the Silk Road or Central Asian culture, indicating that celebrity appeal and the novelty of the format were the primary traffic-driving factors [8].

In terms of recognition of the program's distinctive features, 83.7% of respondents identified collaboration and exchange among transnational musicians, 79.3% selected the experience of exotic culture through overseas shooting, 75.0% selected innovative interpretations of traditional instruments such as the komuz and dombra, and 72.8% selected the presentation of multilingual songs. More than 70% of respondents were able

to accurately identify the program as a Sino-Kazakh jointly produced Silk Road cultural exchange program, suggesting that the communication effect of its core cultural symbols was significant.

With regard to communication effects and the conversion of interest, on a five-point scale, the statement the program helps enhance understanding of the cultures of Silk Road countries received an average score of 4.2, while the program's cultural positioning is highly distinctive received an average score of 4.3. After watching the program, 45.7% of respondents reported that they had developed considerable interest and 40.2% reported some interest, whereas only 14.1% reported no obvious change [7]. These findings indicate that the program effectively stimulated audience interest in Silk Road culture and that the linkage between culture and tourism possesses a potential market basis.

Overall, the questionnaire survey confirms the significant effect of Shengqi Dipingxian in the dissemination of cultural symbols and the conversion of cross-cultural interest. However, its audience remains concentrated primarily among celebrity fans and music enthusiasts, and its broader breakout effect among the general public remains limited.

3.3. Analytical Framework

This study adopts an integrated analytical framework based on the dual perspectives of cultural communication and business model. From the perspective of cultural communication, the analysis focuses on how the program constructs Silk Road cultural imagery through the symbolic selection of locations, participants, and songs; how it generates emotional resonance through the narrative strategy of field research and cultural immersion combined with musical competition; and how it realizes cross-cultural translation in the handling of multilingual songs. From the perspective of business model, the study employs the Business Model Canvas to deconstruct the program's commercial logic across nine dimensions, including value proposition, customer segmentation, revenue streams, and key resources, while also assessing its IP operational potential and directions for optimization. These two perspectives are mutually connected: the effectiveness of cultural communication provides the value foundation for the business model, while the business model provides sustainable operational support for cultural communication.

3.4. Data Collection and Processing

The materials used in this study derive from four channels. The first consists of public materials, including broadcast episodes, official publicity materials, media reports, and ratings data. The second consists of internal materials, including the program proposals, song-selection records, and multilingual lyric-translation review drafts accessed during my internship, all of which have been anonymized. The third consists of theoretical literature, including journal articles, dissertations, and scholarly monographs. The fourth consists of questionnaire survey data, namely audience feedback collected through a self-designed questionnaire, covering aspects such as cultural cognition, emotional attitudes, and consumption intentions. These four categories of data mutually corroborate one another and jointly support the empirical analysis of this study.

3.5. Technical Route of the Study

This study follows the logical sequence of theoretical construction, data collection, case analysis, and conclusion formation. The specific technical route is illustrated below [13].

4. Analysis of the Regional Cultural Communication of Shengqi Dipingxian

4.1. Strategies for the Construction of Cultural Symbols in the Program

Through a series of selective and representational practices involving cultural symbols, Shengqi Dipingxian constructs a distinctive image of Silk Road culture [12].

4.1.1. Location Selection: Spatial Symbols of Silk Road Nodes

The program selected four Kazakhstani cities—Turkistan, Aktau, Almaty, and Astana—as filming locations [9]. These four cities respectively represent Silk Road history, natural scenery, cultural convergence, and modern development, thereby forming a complete chain of spatial narration. By situating the stage in real geographical space, the program gives musical performance a concrete geographic anchor, which is a core characteristic of the music and cultural tourism model.

4.1.2. Participant Selection: Identity Symbols of Transnational Musicians

The program invited musicians from six countries: China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Malaysia, and Italy. This arrangement transcends a single-cultural perspective and enables musicians from diverse cultural backgrounds to exchange ideas and collaborate on the same stage, thereby embodying the program's thematic focus on Silk Road cultural exchange.

4.1.3. Song Selection: Sonic Symbols of Multilingual Music

In selecting songs, the program preserved classic repertoires from the participants' respective countries while also encouraging transnational collaborative adaptations. For example, in the first episode, Kyrgyz singer Nur Cholpon performed the ethnic piece Besh yrgai with a rearrangement that combined the traditional instrument komuz with florid coloratura, thereby demonstrating the distinctive charm of Central Asian music. In the collaborative competition segment in Aktau, Serbian singer Stefan Zdravkovic and Kazakh singer Nurzhas Sadirbayev created a mash-up of the Serbian classic Faraway Place and the Kazakh folk song Samal Mountain [15]. Stefan sang in Kazakh, while Nurzhas responded in Serbian, thereby achieving a genuine form of language-exchange duet. This blending of traditional instruments with modern arrangement, together with the interweaving of multiple languages as sonic symbols, turns music into a bridge of cross-cultural communication.

4.2. Narrative Strategy: Field Research, Cultural Immersion, and Emotional Resonance

The core narrative framework of Shengqi Dipingxian consists of field research, cultural immersion, and musical competition. The program first arranges for the musicians to deeply engage with local communities, experience folk customs, and learn traditional music before proceeding to competitive performances. This narrative logic adds value by infusing subsequent stage performances with authentic local stories and lived emotional experiences [14].

The innovation of this type of program lies in its dialectical unity of boundary-breaking and root-returning. Boundary-breaking is demonstrated through the program's integration of documentary, reality television, and competitive performance, transcending the limitations of the studio. Root-returning, on the other hand, is reflected in the program's grounding in ethnic-cultural traditions and universal human emotional needs. Shengqi Dipingxian uses Silk Road culture as its spiritual foundation and employs transnational field research as a method of boundary-breaking, embodying this concept in practice.

Additionally, the program strengthens viewers' cultural identification by creating a strong sense of ritual. In the second episode, the team composed of Stefan, Zhang Xiyun, and Lee Pei Ling traveled to an expansive sea of sunflowers on the outskirts of Turkistan, where they encountered a group of overseas agricultural entrepreneurs from Xinjiang, China. These young pioneers introduced advanced drip-irrigation technology and agricultural expertise to cultivate cotton, rice, and sunflowers, fostering hope in the process. During their conversation, Zhao Feng, a farmer born in the 1990s, performed his self-composed song For You in the Distance with a guitar in the golden flower field. His heartfelt lyrics and simple melody moved the three singers to tears. Furthermore, before performing A Spike Sinks into the Soil, A Year Rises and Falls, the program witness and renowned singer Lei Jia expressed deep emotion, emphasizing the innate connection and reverence both China and Kazakhstan share for the land. When singers from six countries heard familiar accents in a foreign land and saw compatriots striving on distant soil, a

sense of belonging transcending national borders and language naturally emerged [9]. This unexpected encounter evoked strong participation and empathy among viewers.

4.3. Cross-Cultural Translation: The Localized Expression of Multilingual Songs

During my internship with the production team of Shengqi Dipingxian, I was responsible for the selection of competition songs and the review of multilingual lyric translations. In this process, one of the core challenges was how to accurately convey the cultural implications of Chinese songs to audiences in Kazakhstan and other countries [1].

For example, the program initiator Dimash opened the first episode with the song FIRE (Yan), which adopted a trilingual design combining English, Chinese, and Kazakh. In handling the lyrics cross-culturally, the central challenge we confronted was how to integrate the expressive functions of three languages organically within a single song so that emotional transmission would not be disrupted by language switching. During the lyric-review process, I observed that the Chinese sections were concentrated primarily at key moments of emotional climax in the chorus, where core images such as flame were presented in Chinese. The Kazakh sections were used to express the most ethnically distinctive segments, whereas English, as a language with stronger international accessibility, functioned to connect different linguistic sections and ensure melodic continuity. This strategy of functional distribution across three languages essentially treats different languages as encodable symbols in cross-cultural communication: Chinese conveys force and impact, Kazakh preserves ethnic rootedness and cultural identity, and English performs the function of cross-cultural common intelligibility. The three languages blend seamlessly along the same melodic line, enabling audiences from different cultural backgrounds to find emotional anchor points. This constitutes a practical application of the theory of functional equivalence in music variety programming: rather than seeking complete correspondence in linguistic form, the goal is the effective transmission of the overall artistic effect and cultural implications.

Another illustrative example is the song selection and performance of the Chinese singer Ladan Zhu, which may be regarded as a typical case of the strategy of emotional commensurability. In the Almaty round of competition, Ladan Zhu collaborated with the veteran Kazakh artist Gokharbek on the original work Migration. Gokharbek is skilled in both performing and making the traditional Kazakh instrument known as the kobyz, an ancient bowed instrument whose desolate and far-reaching timbre is often praised as the voice of the Kazakh soul. Ladan Zhu, by contrast, comes from the Yi ethnic group in China, whose high-pitched vocal tradition is likewise known for its penetrating emotional force. On stage, two forms of high-register sound from different ethnic traditions met in dialogue: Yi high-pitched singing and the Kazakh kobyz entered into a musical conversation across thousands of miles. During rehearsals, although the two performers did not share a common spoken language, they were able to move from unfamiliarity to tacit understanding on the basis of a shared belief that they both revere nature. In the formal performance, Ladan Zhu sang in the Yi language while Gokharbek responded on the kobyz. Their two voices intertwined to articulate the common memory of migration among nomadic peoples and their attachment to the land. The performance did not seek deliberately to translate the lyrical content. Rather, it achieved cross-cultural emotional transmission through the texture of sound itself, the emotional direction of the melody, and the exchange of glances on stage. Music-travel documentaries suggest that music can evoke emotional resonance through a fusion narrative of ethnicity and homeland. Inspired by this insight, the present study argues that identifying common emotions across cultures—such as reverence for nature, attachment to homeland, and longing for freedom—is key to effective cross-cultural communication. The case of Migration demonstrates that when verbal translation encounters obstacles, the sonic symbols of music itself and emotional resonance can become a more direct bridge for cross-cultural communication.

These examples show that Shengqi Dipingxian adopts a flexible translation strategy in its cross-cultural translation practices, one that balances cultural fidelity with audience

comprehension. On the premise of preserving core cultural implications, the program uses such methods as free translation, multilingual mixed singing, and the retention of emotional anchors to localize multilingual songs, taking emotional commensurability as its guiding orientation and functional equivalence as its operational method.

5. Business Model Deconstruction Based on the Business Model Canvas

5.1. Value Proposition

The core value proposition of Shengqi Dipingxian may be summarized as a cross-cultural experience carried by Silk Road musical travel. Through its tripartite model of full overseas shooting, on-site cultural immersion, and musical competition, the program integrates musical expression, regional cultural presentation, and tourism promotion within a single content product. For viewers, the program offers audiovisual content combining aesthetic value, knowledge value, and emotional resonance [12]. For advertisers and tourism-promotion institutions, it provides an integrated platform for brand exposure and destination marketing. The program is positioned as the first Sino-Kazakh jointly produced music variety program for Silk Road cultural exchange, with particular emphasis on the policy significance of cultural exchange and the scarcity value of transnational co-production.

5.2. Customer Segments

The program targets three core customer groups. The first consists of general viewers, who may be further categorized into music enthusiasts, travel-interested viewers, followers of Silk Road culture, and general entertainment audiences. The second comprises advertisers and brand partners, including consumer-goods companies seeking to enhance brand recognition through program traffic and cultural-tourism institutions aiming to promote Kazakhstan's tourism resources. The third consists of broadcasting platforms, including Hunan TV, Mango TV, and Kazakhstan National Television, all of which derive user traffic and membership-related value from program content. Although the program's simultaneous distribution across six countries gives its customer base a transregional character, its core audience remains concentrated in the Chinese domestic market.

5.3. Channels

The program's channels can be categorized into broadcast channels and communication channels. For broadcasting, according to official program announcements, the show was aired simultaneously every Thursday at 22:00 on Hunan TV and Mango TV, while also being broadcast on Kazakhstan National Television [1]. Based on the Mango TV platform interface, as of April 2026, full episodes did not require any additional payment from subscribers. Regarding communication channels, the program utilized topic-based marketing through social media platforms such as Weibo and Douyin. According to the production team's official campaign reports, by 27 March 2026 (following the broadcast of episode eight), the program had appeared on trending-search lists 329 times across the internet, with related topics accumulating over 800 million reads. Additionally, the personal Instagram account of the program initiator, Dimash, served as a significant supplementary channel for overseas communication.

5.4. Customer Relationships

The primary method by which the program fosters customer relationships is through emotional storytelling combined with social interaction. At the content level, the competition mechanism of points without elimination reduces viewing pressure, while the genuine interactions between musicians and local communities during the immersion segments—such as the encounter with agricultural entrepreneurs in the sunflower fields in episode two or participation in the Almaty Apple Festival in episode four—enhance viewers' sense of engagement and emotional connection. Beyond the program itself, official Weibo and Douyin accounts released behind-the-scenes footage and artist interactions to maintain audience interest during the broadcast period [12]. Observations

indicate that the official Weibo account generated a relatively high level of topical engagement for each episode.

5.5. Revenue Streams

The program's revenues primarily originate from three sources. The first is advertising and brand sponsorship. As highlighted in the opening and closing credits, the program was specially presented by Golden Camel Dairy, the chief partner of Kazakhstan's National Tourism Year, while brands such as Longmu Zhuanggu Granules also participated as sponsors. The second source is platform copyright revenue generated through simultaneous broadcasting on Hunan TV, Mango TV, and Kazakhstan National Television. Public reports indicate that the program employs a model of overseas investment combined with Chinese production and global sharing, where the Kazakh side provides full investment, and both parties share global copyrights. The third source is digital music revenue. According to the QQ Music platform, some of the competition songs have already been released online, enabling users to stream or purchase downloads.

5.6. Key Resources

The program's key resources can be categorized into four dimensions. The first is brand intellectual property resources: with its thematic focus on Silk Road cultural exchange, the program has received guidance from the Department of International Cooperation of the National Radio and Television Administration, thereby gaining policy endorsement and brand credibility [7]. The second is talent resources, including the initiator Dimash, program witnesses Lei Jia, Li Yugang, Julia Peng, and Cai Guoqing, as well as eight musicians from six countries. The third is production capability, demonstrated by the experience and professional expertise of Luo Xinxing's Hunan TV team in music variety production. The fourth is an international cooperation network, established through collaborative relationships with the Kazakh government and related institutions. Public reports indicate that the Kazakh side provided support in areas such as visas and production coordination.

5.7. Key Activities

The program's key activities include content planning and production, such as immersion-route design, song selection, competition arrangement, and multilingual lyric-translation review. Additionally, it involves multi-platform broadcasting and distribution through Hunan TV, Mango TV, Kazakhstan National Television, and other channels. Social-media marketing and topic operation are also integral, alongside the online release and distribution of digital music.

5.8. Key Partners

The program's key partners are categorized into four levels. At the production level, Hunan Broadcasting System Satellite Channel and Dimash Studio collaborate as joint producers, with Chinese and Kazakh teams engaging in co-research and co-creation. At the broadcasting level, the primary partners include Hunan TV, Mango TV, and Kazakhstan National Television. At the commercial level, major partners consist of Golden Camel Dairy as the chief partner and sponsor brands such as Longmu Zhuanggu Granules. At the policy level, the program operates under the guidance of the Department of International Cooperation of the National Radio and Television Administration and receives support from relevant departments of the Kazakh government. Public reports indicate that officials such as the Minister of Tourism of Kazakhstan and the Kazakh ambassador to China participated in the program's launch event or publicly endorsed the project.

5.9. Cost Structure

The program's primary costs include overseas production expenses, which encompass 22 days of filming across four cities in Kazakhstan. These expenses cover venue rental, transportation and accommodation, local coordination, and translation services. Additional costs include guest remuneration for eight singers from six countries

and four program witnesses, production-team expenses for labor and equipment utilized by Luo Xinxing's Hunan TV team, music copyright and adaptation fees for acquiring and authorizing multilingual song adaptations, and marketing and promotional expenditures for social-media placement and topic operation. Public reports indicate that the investment required for full overseas shooting was relatively high. However, the program's adoption of a collaborative model involving Kazakh investment and Chinese production effectively alleviated the production-cost pressure on Hunan TV.

5.10. Value Extension and IP Operational Potential

Beyond the monetization of the immediate broadcast cycle, the long-term operation of program IP constitutes the key to the sustained amplification of value. From the perspective of cultural capital theory, the cultural capital accumulated through content innovation can be systematically transformed into economic capital and social capital. In this respect, Shengqi Dipingxian has already demonstrated a certain degree of extensibility, although the path of value transformation needs to be aligned with the actual scale of the program's audience.

In terms of digital music, the program's competition songs have gradually been released on QQ Music [16]. Because the program's audience is relatively concentrated within a specific circle—primarily music enthusiasts and celebrity fans—the market return of paid digital albums remains uncertain. A more feasible approach would therefore be to maintain a free-streaming model, generate modest but stable supplementary income through music-platform advertising revenue sharing, and at the same time feed the circulation of songs back into the program's overall popularity.

With respect to cultural-tourism linkage, the program's greatest IP extension value lies in the Silk Road travel route it constructs. Over 22 days, the program traverses four Kazakhstani cities—Turkistan, Aktau, Almaty, and Astana—and vividly presents such real scenes as ancient city ruins, flower-field immersion experiences, and the Apple Festival, thereby forming a same-route travel itinerary endowed with emotional resonance and cultural depth. Compared with study-tour products aimed at the mass market, a more realistic path would be for the production team to collaborate with the Kazakhstan Tourism Board and Chinese embassies or consulates so as to incorporate the program's filming locations into officially recommended Silk Road cultural tour routes, while labeling them in travel brochures and official promotional videos as filming locations of Shengqi Dipingxian. This approach does not depend on directly converting program traffic into tourists; rather, it gradually enhances Kazakhstan's visibility among Chinese travelers through governmental endorsement and long-term brand implantation. Observations of social-media comments indicate that some viewers have already expressed a desire to go and see Kazakhstan, which provides a foundation for subsequent cultural-tourism cooperation.

In terms of other derivative development, given the limited scale of the program's traffic and the relatively constrained purchasing power of its audience, the development of physical cultural-creative products—such as commemorative albums or scale models of ethnic instruments—entails relatively high market risk and should therefore be postponed. Instead, limited resources could be invested in the secondary dissemination of online content, such as behind-the-scenes immersion footage and pure-performance music videos, so as to sustain program visibility at relatively low cost.

To further evaluate systematically the competitive position and development potential of Shengqi Dipingxian, this section introduces the SWOT analytical framework to conduct a comprehensive diagnosis from four dimensions: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This analysis provides the strategic basis for the optimization recommendations proposed below [15].

Overall, the cultural assets of Shengqi Dipingxian are highly distinctive. However, its IP operation should capitalize on strengths while avoiding weaknesses: rather than blindly pursuing direct-to-consumer monetization, it should focus on the official certification of cultural-tourism routes and the long-term accumulation of brand value.

6. Evaluation Based on Broadcast Performance and Optimization Suggestions

6.1. Overview of Broadcast Performance

According to official campaign reports released by the production team and reports by multiple media outlets, from its premiere on 5 February 2026 to 27 March 2026 (episode eight), *Shengqi Dipingxian* achieved the following results. In terms of ratings, it ranked first for eight consecutive weeks in the same time slot among provincial satellite television channels on such rankings as CVB and CSM. In terms of communication, its total online communication volume reached 1.59 billion, it appeared on trending-search lists 329 times across multiple platforms, and related topics accumulated more than 800 million reads. In terms of reputation, it was recommended and reported on by more than 500 media outlets, including major domestic publications. Internationally, it was covered by more than 200 overseas media outlets, while official institutions such as the Embassy of Kazakhstan in China and the Embassy of Malaysia in China recommended the program on social media.

These data indicate that the program achieved remarkable results in terms of cultural communication and official recognition [10]. At the same time, however, it should be noted that the program's communication heat remained concentrated largely within specific circles, especially music enthusiasts and celebrity fans, and did not yet achieve a true breakout effect. This characteristic suggests that the optimization of its business model should not simply replicate the traffic-monetization logic of mass-audience variety shows.

6.2. Room for Business-Model Optimization

Considering the program's resource endowment and audience characteristics, its business model can be optimized in two potential directions.

6.2.1. Deepen the Policy-Cooperation Value of Cultural IP.

The program's greatest differentiating advantage lies in its policy positioning as a Sino-Kazakh co-production centered on the Silk Road theme. It is recommended that the producers establish closer cooperative relationships with relevant administrative bodies such as the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the National Radio and Television Administration to shape the program into a fixed-brand project for cultural exchange under the Belt and Road Initiative. Specifically, this may include applying to become an official content segment within the China-Kazakhstan Tourism Year, participating in the output of materials for national-level cultural external communication activities, and cooperating with overseas embassies and consulates to organize offline screenings and exchange events. Through such measures, the program's core value would no longer depend primarily on advertising and traffic but would instead obtain stable resource support and official endorsement through policy-based cooperation.

6.2.2. Promote the Official Certification and Market Conversion of the Same-Route Travel Itinerary.

The four-city Kazakhstan itinerary presented in the program is both scarce and attractive. However, the direct promotion of study-tour products to end consumers faces the challenge of limited traffic [5]. A more practical approach would involve collaboration with the Kazakhstan Tourism Board and Chinese cultural-tourism enterprises to integrate the program's filming locations into officially recommended Silk Road cultural tour routes. Dedicated pages could be launched on travel platforms such as Trip.com and Fliggy, showcasing check-in routes inspired by *Shengqi Dipingxian*. Additionally, travel bloggers and key opinion leaders could be invited to revisit the program's itinerary and create secondary experiential content. By leveraging the residual influence of the program's materials, this strategy could gradually generate interest among niche but high-value tourists. Rather than aiming for an immediate blockbuster effect, this approach focuses on long-term operations to transform the program's cultural-tourism value into sustainable growth in inbound tourism.

6.3. Summary

In general, the optimization of the business model of Shengqi Dipingxian should adhere to the principle of leveraging strengths while mitigating weaknesses. Instead of blindly pursuing mass-traffic monetization, the focus should be on the program's unique advantages—particularly its policy positioning and cultural-tourism route resources—and achieving a balance between social and economic benefits through business-to-business collaboration and governmental support. While this approach may not yield high short-term returns, it aligns more closely with the program's inherent resource endowment and sustainable development logic [3, 10].

7. Conclusion

7.1. Summary of the Study

Against the backdrop of integrative innovation in music and cultural tourism, this study examines the Sino-Kazakh co-produced variety program Shengqi Dipingxian as a case study. From the dual perspectives of cultural communication and business models, it systematically analyzes the program's regional cultural communication strategies and business-model construction. Utilizing methods such as literature review, case analysis, textual analysis, practice-based observation grounded in internship experience, and questionnaire survey data collection, the study reaches several key conclusions.

7.1.1. Cultural Communication Dimension

First, at the level of symbolic construction, Shengqi Dipingxian builds a multidimensional Silk Road cultural symbolic system through its selection of locations (the four cities of Turkistan, Aktau, Almaty, and Astana), participants (eight musicians from six countries), and songs (multilingual songs and the presentation of traditional instruments). In particular, the modern arranged presentation of traditional instruments such as the komuz, kobyz, and dombra, together with language-exchange duets, constitutes a distinctive set of sonic symbols.

Second, at the level of narrative strategy, the program takes field research and cultural immersion combined with musical competition as its core narrative framework. Through the collection of local stories, such as the encounter with agricultural entrepreneurs in the sunflower fields, and the creation of ritualized scenes, it generates cross-cultural emotional resonance. This narrative logic embodies the dialectical unity of boundary-breaking and root-returning.

Third, at the level of cross-cultural translation, the program adopts strategies such as free translation, functional distribution across multiple languages, and the retention of emotional anchors. The trilingual mixed singing in Dimash's FIRE (Yan) reflects the principle of functional equivalence, in which different languages assume different functions in emotional transmission. By contrast, the collaboration between Ladan Zhu and Gokharbek in Migration demonstrates the strategy of emotional commensurability, whereby the resonance of sound itself transcends linguistic barriers. These practices effectively reduce cultural discount.

7.1.2. Business-Model Dimension

First, the program adopts an innovative cooperative model of overseas investment, Chinese production, and global sharing. Its revenues primarily derive from advertising sponsorship, including Golden Camel Dairy and Longmu Zhuanggu Granules, as well as platform copyright licensing through Hunan TV, Mango TV, and Kazakhstan National Television. Digital music revenue serves as a supplementary source.

Second, analysis through the Business Model Canvas reveals that the program's core resources include policy endorsement from relevant authorities, a diverse talent lineup featuring Dimash and musicians from six countries, production capabilities led by Luo Xinxing's Hunan TV team, and an international cooperation network supported by various stakeholders. However, the cost structure is burdened by relatively high overseas production costs, while revenue sources remain concentrated, indicating that the program's ability to mitigate risks requires further strengthening.

Third, based on SWOT analysis, the program's greatest strengths lie in its policy positioning and the distinctiveness of its cultural assets, while its primary weakness is the difficulty of commercial conversion due to a relatively limited audience base. Accordingly, IP operation should prioritize leveraging strengths while addressing weaknesses. Instead of focusing solely on direct-to-consumer traffic monetization, such as paid albums or physical cultural-creative merchandise, efforts should be directed toward deepening policy cooperation by establishing the program as a fixed-brand project for cultural exchange initiatives. Additionally, transforming knowledge assets, such as constructing a Digital Archive of Silk Road Music, and promoting the official certification and market conversion of the program's same-route travel itinerary, could enhance its commercial viability.

7.2. Theoretical Contributions and Practical Implications

This study develops and validates an integrated analytical framework based on the dual perspectives of cultural communication and business models, offering a reusable tool for analyzing music and cultural tourism variety programs. By employing an internally grounded empirical method, it incorporates the creative processes at the front end of program production into academic analysis, thereby enhancing the empirical foundations of research in arts management and cross-cultural communication.

For program producers, this study highlights the importance of exploring the policy value of Sino-Kazakh co-production and the Silk Road theme to establish the program as a fixed-brand project for cultural exchange under broader international initiatives. Additionally, the multi-ethnic musical materials collected during fieldwork should be systematically organized into a Digital Archive of Silk Road Music, serving as licensable material for academic research and music creation, thus generating sustained returns from knowledge assets. At the industry level, the analytical framework and optimization logic developed in this study may serve as reference points for content innovation and commercial operation in similar music and cultural tourism programs.

7.3. Limitations and Future Prospects

This study has several limitations. First, the program had not yet completed its broadcast at the time of writing, and some data—such as final ratings and the complete online release of songs—still require continued tracking. Second, although the questionnaire survey had already been launched and 92 valid responses had been collected, respondents were predominantly young people aged 18–25, resulting in a relatively homogeneous sample structure. Consequently, the generalizability of the conclusions to a broader audience remains limited. Third, the analysis of the business model relies primarily on publicly reported cost and revenue information, which lacks support from precise financial data.

Future research may build on the present study by further expanding the sample coverage of the questionnaire survey to obtain more representative audience feedback. Additionally, after the program has completed its broadcast, future studies may track and evaluate its full broadcast data and derivative developments. Comparative analyses between Shengqi Dipingxian and other music and cultural tourism programs could also be conducted to identify more generalizable patterns.

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