

# THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF GENERAL MUSIC EDUCATION COURSE OF UNIVERSITIES IN HENAN

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**Received:** June 11, 2023; **Revised:** July 9, 2023; **Accepted:** May 29, 2024

## Abstract

The purposes of this study were (1) To assess the demand for general music education course in Henan universities. (2) To construct a new course plan. (3) To use the new course plan. (4) To evaluate the experimental effects of the new course plans. This study adopts mixed research methods. Targeted on five universities in Henan, the thesis investigates present situation of basic resources setting of university music education, and focuses on specific content of music education general courses, professional teaching staff resources, and students' demand condition for music learning, based on survey methods of questionnaire and interview. Select a class of students in a school as the experimental object, carry out the new course teaching experiment, and evaluate the teaching effect.

The research results of the thesis: (1) there are courses with single teaching content and backward methods, which lead to the lack of innovation and practical ability of students and are not conducive to the development of music education; (2) this paper constructs a new theoretical course, focusing on improving students' application ability, inquiry ability and innovation ability, cultivating students' musical aesthetics and cultural literacy, as well as focusing on setting up different courses for different learning styles and musical interests; (3) using the practical method of new course teaching, with a teaching plan of 30 hours and 2 hours of examination (including pre-course test and post-course test), and evaluating the experimental effect of the new course by means of experiments; (4) The results show that the new course teaching is effective, the

new course content and teaching methods are practical, better promote students' overall development, help improve students' music literacy and creativity, and are welcomed by students.

**Keywords:** general music education; student needs; assessment

## Introduction

As an important link in cultivating talents and passing on culture, music education in colleges and universities in China occupies an important position and is also growing (Chen, 2020). As a province with a rich cultural heritage, Henan pays great attention to music education work, especially the development of music education courses in colleges and universities, while continuously promoting quality education (Deng, 2017). However, in many colleges and universities, there are still various problems with the teaching contents, teaching methods, and evaluation methods of music education courses, which seriously restrict the improvement of the music education level.

First, the existing college music education courses focus on cultivating professional skills but need more consideration of students' individual needs. With the development of social economy and culture, people's cognition and demand for art are constantly changing (Jones, 2016). The music education courses in colleges and universities should also adapt to the market demand and cultivate music talents with solid quality and innovative abilities.

Secondly, there are still many problems with music education courses' teaching and evaluation methods in colleges and universities (Frey & Stutzer, 2016). The traditional teaching mode can no longer meet the needs of the times, and more diversified and innovative teaching modes are needed (Campbell & Robinson, 2018). At the same time, the evaluation methods are also defective, with too much emphasis on examination results, rote memorization, and a lack of evaluation of students' abilities. Such evaluation methods fail to reflect the true level of students and also fail to stimulate students' learning enthusiasm and creative thinking.

To sum up, it is necessary to study the needs assessment of music education courses in colleges and universities in order to understand the current situation of music education courses in colleges and universities, explore the actual needs of students, and then improve the design and reform of music education courses in order to meet the needs of students better and promote the development of education.

## Research Objectives

1. To assess the demand for general music education course in Henan universities.
2. To construct a new course plan.
3. To use the new course plan for teaching experimental group.
4. To evaluate the experimental effects of the new course plan.

## Literature Reviews

**Assessment Methodology:** Questionnaires are a widely used evaluation method for understanding the opinions, behaviors and attitudes of respondents. While they offer the advantage of quickly collecting large amounts of data and analyzing the opinions and ideas of various types of respondents, questionnaires also have the disadvantage of potentially receiving untruthful or incomplete answers, which requires careful consideration during the questionnaire design and data collection process (Kozlowski, 2017).

**The interview method** involves obtaining information through face-to-face or telephone conversations using open-ended questions to gain a detailed understanding of the appraisee's views and opinions. The advantage of this method is the ability to target specific issues and collect richer information about intentions. However, its disadvantage is the relatively long collection time and the susceptibility to interviewer bias, which may affect the accuracy of the collected data (Sun & Zuo, 2019).

**Experimental design:** Li and Wang (2021) said experimental design is an evaluation method that obtains data by conducting human-controlled experiments on the evaluated subjects. It includes many different forms of experimental methods such as randomized controlled trials and before-and-after

controlled trials. The advantage of experimental design is that it can eliminate interference factors and obtain more reliable data, but its disadvantage is that it hinders the natural state of the evaluated object, and the experiment itself may be affected by problems such as experimental design and sample size.

**Document Analysis:** The literature assessment method refers to the collection, synthesis, and analysis of information for assessment by consulting relevant books, literature, statistical data, and other materials. The advantage of the literature assessment method is that the information collected is objectively available and the assessment results are more convincing. The disadvantage is that there is relatively little knowledge of the appraisal field and sufficient information cannot be obtained.

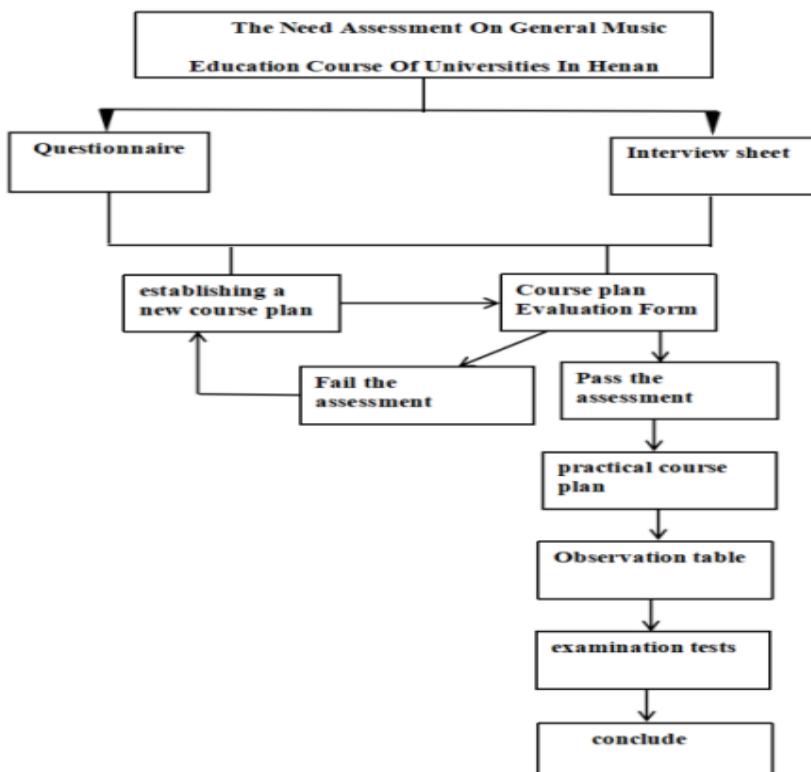
**Music Education:** Music education in higher education should match the needs of society and that classroom teaching should be closely related to artistic practice and compatible with the ultimate goal of talent development.

**Music Education in Chinese Universities:** "On Music Education," discusses the concepts and connotations of music pedagogy, including the functions of music, the reform of music education, and musical and spiritual aesthetics. Music education in Chinese colleges and universities has undergone significant change and development, resulting in a unique music education system. Currently, Chinese colleges and universities offer various majors in vocal music, instrumental music, composition, and music education, injecting new vitality into the growth and development of the music industry (Liu, 2018).

**How to assess course:** Assessment of the course is an important part of ensuring the quality of student learning, and it is also very important for the improvement and optimization of the course. The following are some of the methods used to evaluate the course.

**How to improve course:** In terms of course design, we can try to offer elective courses with professionalism and frontiers, so that students can choose courses according to their interests and specialties, thus meeting their individual needs. At the same time, in the process of course implementation, we should also pay attention to the innovation and diversification of course teaching methods, using heuristic teaching and other methods to stimulate students' learning enthusiasm and initiative, so as to improve students' learning effect in all aspects.

## Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1:** Conceptual Framework

## Research Methodology

This study adopts mixed research methods, the research tools were: Interview form, Observation form, New Course Evaluation Form, Test form.

**Population:** This study selected Henan Normal University, Anyang Normal University, Pingdingshan University, Zhengzhou Institute of Industrial Application Technology and Jiaozuo University as the research object. The five universities have nearly 40,000 second-year students. There are more than 400 music teachers. **Samples:** Sample selection A simple random sampling method was adopted to conduct a needs assessment questionnaire survey on 500 students from 30 non-music major classes in five universities who had participated in general music courses and 60 teachers who taught general music courses in five universities. Taking Zhengzhou Institute of Industrial Application Technology as an example, a class of 40 students in grade Two was selected to carry out experimental teaching of the new course of general music.

**Data analysis:** Qualitative research: Descriptive analysis of teaching practice instructional evaluations, expert teacher interviews and student classroom observations. Quantitative research: Questionnaire, class teaching pre-test and post-test for statistical analysis.

## Results

Assess the demand for general music education course in Henan universities: A total of 500 student questionnaires were distributed in five universities, with an efficiency rate of 87%, and 60 teacher questionnaires were distributed with a 100% efficiency rate. After expert evaluation, the questionnaire survey questions were deemed reasonably designed and comprehensive, with a high IOC evaluation score, they scored 0.86 and 0.88 points, respectively. The survey found that general elective courses lacked consideration for students' interests and needs, resulting in disinterest and absenteeism. There is a need for specialized research on teaching methods and contents for non-music majors. Teachers lack uniformity in their use of teaching materials, and there are no standardized materials in any of the five colleges.

Most students believe that a liberal arts music education program is necessary, indicating the importance and awareness of music education among students. Efforts should be made to promote and popularize liberal music education to improve students' musical literacy and cultural tastes.

**Construct a new course plan:** In order to improve the pertinency of general music education courses and better carry out general music education teaching, the researchers used the teachers' and students' needs evaluation, expert interviews and general music education theory knowledge. Firstly, the outline of Chinese folk song appreciation course plan suitable for sophomore students was formulated, and then the composition of Chinese folk song plan was determined and the complete version of the course plan was completed. Finally, a second group of experts was asked to evaluate the course plan, and then the experimental study was carried out.

Use the new course plan for teaching experimental group: This chapter outlines the objectives and teaching plan for a Chinese folk song appreciation course. The course aims to deepen students' understanding of the cultural connotation and artistic value of Chinese folk songs, improve their musical literacy and aesthetic ability, and cultivate their cultural confidence, lifelong learning awareness, and innovative spirit. The 16-week program covers topics such as the history, development, form, melody, rhythm, and singing style of folk songs, as well as local and minority folk songs, modern folk songs, folk songs and culture, comprehensive appreciation, application, and innovation. A mock teaching design and case study were conducted at Zhengzhou Institute of Industrial Application Technology using lecture, inspiration, and discussion as teaching modes, with two exams before and after the course. Student classroom performance:

**Figure1:** Classroom Observation Form (Student Activity Observation)  
Excellent, good, medium and poor are scored as 5, 4, 3 and 2 respectively.

Time	Location	Subjects
September 2022	classroom	Appreciation of Chinese folk songs
Observation teacher	Wu jixia	

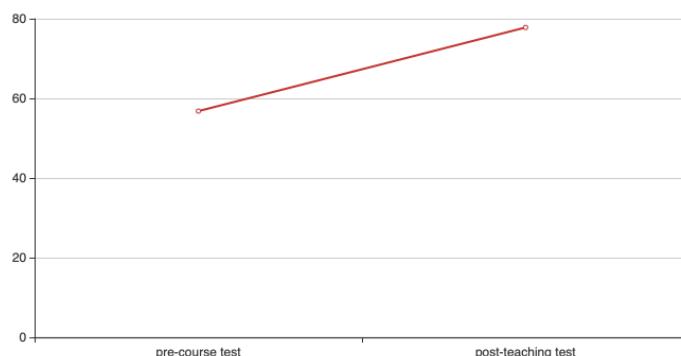
Observation records	Student Performance	Rating
	Whether the interest in learning is strong. Whether the learning mood is high.	5
	Ability to actively participate in teaching activities	5
	Attitude towards the teacher. Able to actively cooperate with the teacher	5
	The ability to work effectively with classmates and to accommodate the learning needs of other students in cooperative learning.	4
	In learning, the ability to boldly question and disagree with the ideas put forward by teachers and classmates	3
	The ability to apply knowledge and skills already acquired to solve new problems in learning.	4
In learning, can you reflect on your learning behavior and adjust your learning strategies		4

According to the observation records, the students performed well in this class. Students were more interested in learning, more motivated to learn, able to actively participate in teaching activities, and actively cooperate with the teacher and classmates, showing good teamwork spirit. In cooperative learning, students were able to take care of the learning needs of other students, but they showed a slightly conservative performance and lacked the spirit of active questioning and questioning when it came to the questions raised by the teacher and classmates.

Students performed relatively well in applying their existing knowledge to solve new problems, but there is still some room for improvement in reflecting on their learning behaviors and adjusting their learning strategies. To sum up, students performed well in this class, but they need further improvement in independent learning, thinking and questioning.

Evaluate the experimental effects of the new course plan: The author used a semester experiment to test the learning of the general music education course Chinese folk songs appreciation by a total of 40 students in Class 6, Mechanical Design and Manufacturing and Automation, School of Mechanical Engineering, Class 20. Before the start of the course, the students were tested to have a general understanding of Chinese folk songs appreciation, theoretical teaching and folk songs appreciation and learning to sing practice, and the students' mastery of the course content was examined through a post-class test.

According to the data provided, the average score for the post-teaching test was 77.8, which is an increase of 21 points from the average score of 56.8 in the pre-course test. This represents a significant improvement in the students' performance in the general music course.



**Figure 2:** Improvement in the average score of two exams.

By comparing the data of the test before and after class, the above teaching methods and strategies are feasible, and students have made remarkable progress in the general music test. I believe that as long as we persevere, continue to innovate and improve, we will certainly help more students to achieve excellent results in general music courses.

## Discussions

In the folk song appreciation course, experts have made different suggestions and approaches, including focusing on diversity and individualization, emphasizing ethnic characteristics and local culture, optimizing teacher training and teaching innovation, focusing on theoretical knowledge and practical skills, paying attention to students' needs and characteristics, and keeping pace with social development. Through diversified teaching methods and means, students' perceptual experience and rational thinking are combined to improve their artistic and cultural quality and aesthetic ability. This paper differs from other studies in that it proposes highly targeted, systematic and standardized directions and recommendations for improvement, focusing on diversified content and practical activities, as well as interactive teaching methods and the application of multimedia resources. The paper also describes in some detail the pedagogical methods and tools used in folk song appreciation courses, including listening, analysis and evaluation, singing, composition and performance, cultural experiences, and community activities.

In addition, the paper emphasizes the important role of teachers in music education, stressing the need for teachers to have more expertise and teaching experience and to pay attention to the individual needs of students. The paper is innovative in that it proposes the idea of using general music education programs to promote general music education and develop more musical talent. Argued that there is a need to look at multiple aspects when evaluating the needs of music education programs, including the needs of different groups such as students, teachers, and parents (Usher, 2011). In addition, have also argued that the influence of local cultural and social context on music education should be taken into account when assessing music education needs. The main difference between this study and others is that it focuses on exploring the actual needs of students in the learning 185 process, and it will conduct field observations and use multiple research methods to dig deeper into students' needs. The study is multidimensional and aims to explore in depth the needs of Henan college students for general music education. The research methods are diverse, combining questionnaires, interviews, field observations, and other research methods, and combining theoretical research with practical operations to improve the reliability and practicality of the research results. In conclusion, this paper provides some valuable directions and suggestions for improvement,

which can guide the teaching practice of university music education and folk song appreciation courses. At the same time, this paper also gives some questions worth exploring. How to better cultivate students' musical literacy and aesthetic ability, how to better guide students' independent inquiry and discovery, and how to better apply new teaching methods and technologies are all issues that need further research.

This paper presents a study of a general education music course on folk song appreciation. The course was developed through teacher and student needs assessments, expert interviews, and knowledge of general music education theory, and was evaluated favorably in a pilot study. This paper details the content, pedagogy, and assessment methods of the course and analyzes its performance. This study plans to cover the origin and development of folk songs, the classification and styles of folk songs, and the appreciation and singing practice of folk songs to help students master the knowledge and skills related to folk song appreciation, develop their knowledge and understanding of traditional Chinese culture, and improve their appreciation and expression of music at the same time. This study combines new course plans with practical needs and a broader perspective on cultural exchange and cross-cultural teaching. In addition, the 186 study will use a variety of research methods, including questionnaires and interviews, to improve the credibility and usefulness of the research results. That the balance of music skills and knowledge should be paid attention to when constructing music education course, and that involving Chinese and Western music cultures should not ignore traditional music culture (Catterall, 2012). Meanwhile, that music classroom teaching methods should be reformed to accommodate the needs of different learners (Harris, 2018).

In conclusion, this study contributes to the development and promotion of Chinese folk song appreciation education, but it still needs further improvement and refinement in practice. It is hoped that more researchers will participate in this area of research in the future to jointly promote the development of folk song appreciation education.

## New Knowledges

The general music program is a very important course in school education, which not only helps students develop musical skills and qualities, but also cultivates their aesthetic and cultural qualities, and improves their overall quality and creativity. And the examination results are one of the important criteria to assess students' learning outcomes. Therefore, how to improve the performance of general music exams is an issue that every general

music teacher needs to pay attention to and think about. The following are my personal experiences and insights on how to successfully improve students' test scores through a series of teaching methods and strategies in teaching general music courses.

For the content of the general music course, I have emphasized the learning and mastery of the fundamentals. This includes instruction in music theory, instrument playing, and vocal training. Through a carefully designed course and teaching plan, I ensure that students are able to gradually expand their musical skills and qualities while mastering the basics.

Focus on the innovation and improvement of teaching methods and means. In general music education, traditional teaching methods and means can no longer meet the needs and expectations of students, so we need to keep exploring and innovating. I enhance the interest and participation of the classroom by using multimedia teaching, interactive teaching and project-based learning to stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm in learning. Focus on feedback and assessment during the teaching process. Timely feedback and assessment are one of the most important means to improve students' performance in exams. I keep abreast of students' learning and problems through group work and mock exams, and provide targeted guidance and counseling.

In conclusion, the goals of general music courses are diverse and include improving students' music appreciation, developing music literacy, enhancing aesthetic skills, helping to understand the relationship between different cultures and music. These goals coordinate and support each other, and together they help students better understand and appreciate music.

## Conclusions

With the development of society and the increasing emphasis on artistic literacy, music education has become an increasingly important part of university education. However, in most university general music education courses, students do not learn well, and there are many problems due to the lack of practical application and interactivity. Therefore, teachers have raised higher expectations and demands for building a new university general music education course. From the results of the teachers' questionnaires, the university general music education course should focus on music appreciation and appreciation

skills, music theory knowledge, music performance skills, and music composition skills. Teachers also expect more diversified content, including folk song appreciation, and more practical activities to develop students' creative thinking and practical skills. Teachers believe that cross-disciplinary integration with other disciplines will improve students' overall quality and future competitiveness. Teachers emphasized that adding music appreciation and appreciation guides students to understand and appreciate different types of music to improve their aesthetic and cultural literacy.

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