

CONSTRUCTING OF TEACHING GUIDEBOOK OF THE NORTHERN SHAANXI FOLK SONGS AT NINGXIA ETHNIC VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

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Abstract

Rooted in the rich tapestry of Asian cultural identity, folk music plays an essential role in preserving regional heritage, religious symbolism, and social values. In China, Northern Shaanxi folk songs represent not only musical expression but also the historical memory and spiritual resilience of the local communities, often intertwined with rituals, ancestral worship, and the daily lives of the working class. In this cultural context, this study aims to preserve and revitalize the heritage of Northern Shaanxi folk songs through the development and implementation of a targeted teaching guidebook at Ningxia Ethnic Vocational and Technical College in the People's Republic of China. The research was guided by four objectives: (1) to study Northern Shaanxi folk songs through insights from key informants; (2) to construct a dedicated teaching guidebook for students and educators; (3) to experiment with the use of the guidebook among first-year students majoring in vocal music; and (4) to evaluate the effectiveness of this guidebook in enhancing teaching and learning outcomes. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study combined qualitative data from expert interviews with quantitative performance assessments. Three renowned folk singers and cultural experts—Professor Zhang Yanling, Associate Professor Zhou Min, and Associate Professor Yong Xiaowei—provided in-depth perspectives on pedagogical and cultural aspects of

Northern Shaanxi folk music. Based on this input, researchers developed a structured teaching guide, which was validated by experts and applied in an experimental classroom setting. The sample included 20 first-year students selected via cluster random sampling from a population of 100 vocal music majors. Quantitative evaluation revealed that students taught using the guidebook demonstrated significant improvements in vocal technique, emotional expression, and cultural understanding compared to those who did not receive the intervention. The results confirm that the guidebook is an effective tool for cultivating musical skills and cultural literacy, offering a practical reference model for other institutions aiming to integrate regional folk traditions into modern music education.

Keywords: Teaching guidebook; Northern Shaanxi; Folk songs; Ningxia ethnic vocational and technical college

Introduction

As one of China's national intangible cultural heritages, Northern Shaanxi folk songs stand as a testament to the region's rich cultural tapestry. These songs are not merely auditory delights but also profound reflections of the people's history, struggles, and aspirations. With their distinct regional cultural characteristics, they have forged a unique artistic identity that resonates with the national and regional spirit. The melodies of Northern Shaanxi folk songs are known for their simplicity and brightness, often marked by enthusiasm and upliftment. The music is unadorned, warm, and robust, with a raw and loud quality that echoes the unvarnished nature of the Loess Plateau. The lyrics are straightforward and unpretentious, drawing from the wellspring of everyday life, making them relatable and endearing to the local populace. The themes are diverse, encompassing the joys of Xintian travel, the toil of mountain climbing, and the rich tapestry of customs and traditions. In the realm of vocal music education, the teaching of Northern Shaanxi folk songs presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities. The singing range of these songs is broad, requiring singers to possess a wide vocal range. The melodies often undergo significant variations, requiring vocalists to employ a rich array of singing techniques. This includes blending true and falsetto voices, a skill that adds depth and versatility to their performances (Chen, 2024).

Moreover, pronunciation and enunciation are critical, as they convey the cultural nuances and emotional hues that define these folk songs. The speed at which the songs are sung also varies, often dictated by the narrative's pace and the emotional intensity of the lyrics. These elements combine to form a distinctive style that sets Northern Shaanxi folk songs apart from other musical genres, most of the popular folk songs in Northern Shaanxi were born out of a tumultuous period in Chinese history, stretching from the end of the 19th century to the 1940s. These songs are more than just musical compositions; they are historical documents that reflect the revolutionary spirit of the people resisting the oppression and exploitation under feudal rule. They are also local folk songs that mirror the social changes and the lived experiences of the people during this transformative era. For music educators, the task of integrating the ideological content of these songs with vocal techniques is a complex yet rewarding pursuit. It requires a deep understanding of the cultural context, the historical background, and the emotional landscape that these songs represent. By doing so, teachers can help students not only master the technical aspects of singing but also appreciate the profound cultural significance that these songs hold. Sun Qingqing (2023), "Practical Research on Folk Songs of Northern Shaanxi in the Singing Teaching Module of Ordinary High Schools," China Excellent Master's Thesis Full Text Database, page 79. The music teaching content is divided into six modules, with singing being the second largest module. Singing education in ordinary high schools faces new opportunities for development, making ethnic singing a key approach in music education. Music education, as an important component of quality education, can effectively enhance students' aesthetic ability, cultivate their emotions, improve their cultural literacy, enhance their physical and mental health, and develop ethnic music. From the current perspective of high school education, there is still a situation of neglecting the teaching of singing ethnic music. In actual teaching, it is necessary to establish new teaching concepts in order to improve the effectiveness of classroom teaching. This study investigates the current situation of high school music singing teaching, designs teaching models in accordance with the requirements of the curriculum standards, and promotes the widespread implementation of "local folk songs in schools" in China.

The teaching of Northern Shaanxi folk songs in vocal music education is more than just an academic exercise. It is a journey into the soul of a region, an exploration of its people's resilience, and a celebration of their cultural heritage. As music teachers continue to delve into this rich musical tradition, they play a crucial role in preserving and perpetuating the legacy of these timeless songs for future generations. The study of Northern Shaanxi folk songs also opens up avenues for interdisciplinary research, drawing from fields such as ethnomusicology, cultural studies, and history. Scholars can examine the ways in which these songs have evolved over time, reflecting changes in society, technology, and cultural interactions. The songs serve as a window into the past, offering insights into the lives and struggles of the people who created them (Zhao, 2022). Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi are a brilliant cultural pearl nurtured by the thousands of gullies on the Loess Plateau. The simple and honest people of Northern Shaanxi have lived on this land for generations, using their unique musical forms to record and express their own production and lifestyle; Use the most direct language to convey the simplest emotions. This emotion is about love, family, life, and country, encompassing various aspects of local people's lives. The music material is concise, the content is rich, the local colors are rich, and the style is prominent. Up to now, it has not only preserved the original artistic style, but also endowed new musical connotations. Thus, a new artistic charm emerged. Therefore, it has greater research value. Only by effectively and deeply exploring the singing art of Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi can we maintain their healthy development, give them new development momentum and artistic vitality, and promote the healthy and sustainable development of ethnic vocal music in practice.

Research Objectives

- 1.To study northern Shaanxi folk song from key informants.
- 2.To construct the northern Shaanxi folk song teaching guidebook for Ningxia ethnic vocational and technical college.
- 3.To experiment by using Northern Shaanxi folk song teaching guidebook for first-year students at Ningxia vocational and technical college.
- 4.To evaluation of teaching effectiveness at Ningxia ethnic vocational and technical college using the Northern Shaanxi folk song teaching guidebook.

Literature Reviews

Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi: Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi, as a unique musical form in northwest China, have a profound historical background and cultural characteristics. The following is a brief introduction to the history, background, culture, and representative works of Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi. History and Background: Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi originated in the northern region of Shaanxi Province, China, which was historically known as "Shaanbei" and is part of the Loess Plateau. The history of these songs can be traced back thousands of years, initially improvised by working people in the fields to express emotions, convey information, and entertain. With the passage of time, Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi have gradually developed into a musical form with distinct regional characteristics. They not only record the living conditions of local people, but also reflect social changes and historical events. Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi, deeply rooted in the rich cultural soil of northern Shaanxi, are an integral part of China's intangible cultural heritage. The Loess Plateau, with its unique geographical environment, has nurtured a distinctive folk culture that is both resilient and expressive. These songs, often referred to as the soul of the plateau, have been passed down through generations, evolving with the ebb and flow of life in the region.

The origins of Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi are shrouded in the mists of time, with some suggesting they may date back to the Neolithic period. Initially, these melodies were simple tunes, spontaneously composed by farmers and herdsmen to accompany their labor. They would sing to alleviate the monotony of their work, to express their love for the land, and to communicate with one another across vast distances (Kong, 2024). Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi originated on the Loess Plateau. These folk songs and tunes can be heard across more than 90,000 square kilometers and 25 cities and counties on the Loess Plateau in northern Shaanxi. The hardworking, simple, and kind people of northern Shaanxi express their various feelings in daily life, labor, festivals, and customs through singing. These folk songs, passed down through generations, have ultimately become a comprehensive record of the social, historical, cultural, and folk beliefs of the Loess Plateau in northern Shaanxi.

Northern Shaanxi folk music has a unique style, with its regional cultural characteristics evident in melody, singing style, and musical structure. The dialect characteristics of Northern Shaanxi folk songs align with the local dialect, with distinct regional vocabulary and cultural features. Regarding singing characteristics, Northern Shaanxi folk songs exhibit a variety of singing techniques. Based on these characteristics, the “Northern Shaanxi Folk Song Exhibition” is divided into five sections: “A Thousand Years of Roots Buried in Yellow Soil” and “Shan Dan Blooms Red and Gorgeous.” The exhibition offers a comprehensive overview of the development of Northern Shaanxi folk songs, highlighting the beauty of the region’s folk art in contemporary times. The folk songs in northern Shaanxi have a profound cultural heritage, strong regional music, and strong, sincere and full emotions. What is commendable is that it has a rich amount of music, and the collection, recording, and organization time is relatively early and the system is complete. It is particularly noteworthy that it played an important role in a specific political and historical period in China, and had a significant impact on the creation, performance, and research of Chinese music in the future (Yang, 2024). People in a specific cultural field tend to have a consistent aesthetic towards music, which in turn leads to the formation, dissemination, and development of music in that cultural field presenting unique regional characteristics, including music genres, music themes, musical styles, melodies, and instrument accompaniment. The formation, dissemination, and development of folk songs in northern Shaanxi also follow the above mechanism. Northern Shaanxi folk songs originate from the daily work and life of the laboring people in the Northern Shaanxi region. They are a type of primitive music that carries the natural emotions of the people in northern Shaanxi, as well as the spiritual outlook, folk customs, and aesthetic tendencies of the people in the region (Zhu, 2023).

Over the centuries, as the people of Northern Shaanxi faced various challenges, including natural disasters, wars, and social upheavals, these songs took on a deeper significance. They became a means of documenting the region’s history, capturing the essence of the people’s struggles and aspirations. The lyrics often tell stories of heroism, romance, and the simple joys of rural life, all set against the backdrop of the plateau’s sweeping landscapes. The music of Northern Shaanxi folk songs is characterized by its high-pitched and passionate delivery, which is believed to have been influenced by the need to

project over long distances and the wind-swept terrain. The melodies are typically pentatonic, with a strong emphasis on the second and third tones, creating a haunting and emotive quality that is instantly recognizable. One of the most distinctive features of Northern Shaanxi folk songs is their improvisational nature. Singers often create new verses on the spot, drawing from their immediate surroundings or personal experiences. This tradition has ensured that the songs remain a living, breathing art form, constantly refreshed and revitalized by the creativity of the people. In addition to their entertainment value, Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi have served as a form of social commentary. They have been used to voice dissent, to celebrate victories, and to mourn losses. During times of social change, such as the Cultural Revolution, the songs took on a political dimension, reflecting the sentiments and ideologies of the era. The preservation and promotion of Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi have been supported by the Chinese government and various cultural organizations. Efforts have been made to include them in educational curricula, to organize festivals and competitions, and to document the vast repertoire of songs in written form. This has helped to raise awareness of the cultural significance of these songs, both within China and internationally. In recent years, there has been a resurgence of interest in traditional folk music, with many young musicians embracing the genre and giving it a modern twist. This has led to a fascinating fusion of old and new, as Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi are reinterpreted with contemporary instruments and styles, ensuring that they continue to resonate with new audiences. The future of Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi looks promising, as they stand as a testament to the enduring spirit of the people of the Loess Plateau. They are more than just songs; they are the heartbeat of a region, the voice of its history, and the embodiment of its cultural identity. As long as the people of Northern Shaanxi continue to sing, these songs will endure, echoing across the plateau and into the hearts of all who hear them. Cultural Features: The cultural characteristics of Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi are mainly reflected in the following aspects:

Language Characteristics: The language characteristics of folk songs in northern Shaanxi are very distinct, deeply rooted in the dialects of the northern region of Shaanxi. This dialect has unique pronunciation and intonation, making the song sound unique. The charm and rhythm of the dialects in northern

Shaanxi give folk songs a simple and friendly feeling, allowing listeners to feel the regional culture and life atmosphere contained in the songs.

Main content: The folk songs in northern Shaanxi are rich and diverse, covering various aspects such as love, labor, natural landscapes, and resistance against feudal oppression. These songs usually express people's longing for a better life and their resistance to unfair phenomena. Love songs are gentle and delicate, labor songs showcase the hardworking and simple qualities of the people in northern Shaanxi, natural landscape songs depict the magnificent mountains and vast grasslands of northern Shaanxi, and songs that resist feudal oppression express the people's desire for freedom and equality (Zhang, 2021). The folk song culture in northern Shaanxi has distinctive characteristics of regional original thinking, and it preserves complete and rich ethnic and folk cultural content, which is the essence of ethnic and folk music culture in northern Shaanxi. The folk music of northern Shaanxi has a strong regional color, with the Shang mode, Zheng mode, and Yu mode being the most common among the pentatonic modes. The main style is characterized by the jumping structure of double quartic melodies, with the main note forming a quartic interval in the upward and downward directions to form a double quartic framework and various variations.

Music Form: Folk songs from northern Shaanxi have high artistic value in terms of music form. It includes various singing forms such as solo, duet, choir, etc. The melody is usually high pitched and passionate, which can stimulate the emotions of the audience. The rhythm is free and flexible, able to adapt to the fast pace of life and express deep emotions. The diversity of this musical form enables Northern Shaanxi folk songs to adapt to different occasions and audience needs (Chen, 2017). The folk songs of northern Shaanxi can be said to be the essence of Chinese folk songs. As the main musical component, the folk songs of northern Shaanxi are the main intangible cultural heritage of China, representing the inheritance of our national culture and containing rich ethnic sentiments. The folk songs of northern Shaanxi typically depict the colors of life and inner world of the people in northern Shaanxi through the art form of singing. The distinctive musical expression and lively, bright, and high-spirited style have attracted a large audience. While expressing

the simple and pure hearts of the people in northern Shaanxi, it also fully demonstrates the practical and cultural value of folk songs in northern Shaanxi.

Social Function: Folk songs in northern Shaanxi are not only a form of entertainment, but also play an important role in social exchange and cultural inheritance. Through songs, people can share their life experiences, exchange ideas and emotions, and strengthen the cohesion of the community. At the same time, folk songs are also an important carrier for inheriting the history and culture of northern Shaanxi. They record the changes in the lives and spiritual outlook of the people in northern Shaanxi, and serve as a bridge connecting the past and the future. By singing these songs, the younger generation can better understand and inherit the cultural traditions of northern Shaanxi.

Research Methodology

The mixed research method enables researchers to explore research questions from different perspectives, offering in-depth insights through qualitative data, while extensively summarizing and validating findings through quantitative data. **Population:** This study selected first-year students from Ningxia Ethnic Vocational and Technical College in the People's Republic of China. There are 100 first-year students majoring in popular vocal music. **Samples:** The sample for the experimental study is 20 first-year students majoring in popular vocal music. Select samples using cluster random sampling method. **Key informants:** 1. Professor Zhang Yanling: Famous Shaanbei folk singer and Chinese first-class actor. 2. Associate Professor Zhou Min: Shaanbei folk singer, national first-class actor. 3. Associate Professor Yongxiaowei: Shaanbei folk singer, inheritor of intangible cultural heritage **Data collection:** Conduct in-depth interviews with experts to further understand students' learning situation in school and teachers' teaching situation. Explore the most suitable method for Ningxia Vocational and Technical College to compile the "Shaanbei Folk Song Teaching Guide". Construction of Northern Shaanxi Folk Song Teaching Syllabus at Ningxia Vocational and Technical College for Nationalities. 1) Researchers have developed a "teaching guide" for first-year vocal students at Ningxia Vocational and Technical College for Nationalities, which requires verification by three experts. 2) This teaching guide provides some teaching suggestions for other art schools that offer courses on Folk songs

of Northern Shaanxi. 3) The teaching guide provides professional standards and references for students of Folk songs of Northern Shaanxi in singing skills, work selection, emotional expression, etc., laying a solid and stable foundation for entering the first year of university. Quantitative research section: Randomly select experimental subjects from 100 first year students majoring in vocal music at Ningxia Vocational and Technical College. Among them, 10 students use this teaching guide for teaching, while the remaining 90 students do not receive this teaching. Using quantitative evaluation methods, evaluate the live performance of students who have studied the "Shaanbei Folk Song Teaching Guide" and those who have not studied the guide in singing Shaanbei folk songs.

Results

Northern Shaanxi Folk Song

The teaching of Northern Shaanxi folk songs has undergone significant transformation over time, shifting from basic presentations of musical notation and lyrics to comprehensive resources enriched with cultural, historical, and musical depth. In the past, instructional materials were limited in scope, offering only superficial information and neglecting the influence of regional geography, lifestyle, and traditions on the development of the genre. However, contemporary teaching materials now incorporate detailed background on the arid landscape of Northern Shaanxi and the resilient spirit of its people, which shaped the region's distinctive rough and passionate singing style. These updated resources use modern educational technologies such as multimedia tools, annotated scores, and online archives to enhance the learning experience, while also emphasizing practical exercises to help students master authentic vocal techniques. The latest materials are systematically organized by thematic categories—such as labor songs, love songs, and festive music—each supported by cultural interpretations and musical analysis. Interviews with local artists and scholars further bridge theoretical understanding with real-world practice, offering insight into traditional performance methods and enriching the emotional connection to the music. Despite these improvements, several challenges remain. Teaching the unique vocal techniques of Northern Shaanxi folk songs is difficult due to their divergence from conventional vocal training

and the lack of expert guidance. In many cases, instruction still fails to incorporate sufficient cultural context, resulting in performances that lack emotional depth and authenticity. Moreover, educational institutions may face resource limitations, including inadequate access to original recordings or opportunities to engage with tradition bearers, thus restricting students' exposure to the true essence of the folk music. Overall, the shift from simplistic to in-depth and experience-based materials represents a major step forward in preserving and promoting Northern Shaanxi folk song heritage, yet attention must continue to be paid to pedagogical challenges and resource accessibility in order to ensure meaningful transmission of this vital cultural tradition.

Constructing the Northern Shaanxi Folk Song Teaching Guidebook for Ningxia Ethnic Vocational and Technical College

The construction of the Northern Shaanxi Folk Song Teaching Guidebook for Ningxia Ethnic Vocational and Technical College aims to preserve and promote regional cultural heritage while standardizing and enhancing teaching quality. This guidebook is specifically designed for students majoring in relevant disciplines and educators engaged in folk music instruction at the college. It highlights the cultural significance of Northern Shaanxi folk songs in enriching campus life and transmitting national identity. Beginning with an overview of the geographical, historical, and social conditions of Northern Shaanxi, the guidebook explores how local customs and the environment shaped the development of the region's distinctive folk music. It examines the historical evolution of these songs, their representative works across eras, and their integral role in community events like temple fairs, weddings, and funerals. Musically, the guidebook delves into their melodic structure—featuring pentatonic scales, dramatic contours, and unique local motifs—alongside rhythm types such as free and regular meter, each with its expressive function. It also explains commonly used modes like Zheng and Yu, and analyzes lyrical features marked by simplicity, vivid imagery, and everyday life expressions. The guidebook further addresses the core singing techniques essential to Northern Shaanxi folk music, such as combined thoracic-abdominal breathing, the balanced use of true and false voice, and proper articulation of regional dialects. Emotional expressiveness through voice, facial expression, and gesture is emphasized to help learners convey the spirit of the songs

authentically. In support of instruction, the guidebook recommends both traditional and adapted song selections, multimedia resources including audio-visual materials and documentaries, and experiential learning such as competitions, performances, and artist-led workshops. It also suggests supplementary readings and scholarly articles for deeper academic exploration. Finally, the guidebook outlines a comprehensive system for evaluation and feedback, covering technical, musical, and expressive competencies, using diverse assessment methods such as teacher evaluation, peer review, and student self-assessment. This ensures continuous improvement in both teaching and learning, fostering a dynamic and meaningful engagement with Northern Shaanxi folk music.

Experimenting by Using Northern Shaanxi folk Song Teaching Guidebook for First-Year Students at Ningxia Vocational and Technical College

The experimental application of the Northern Shaanxi Folk Song Teaching Guidebook for first-year students at Ningxia Vocational and Technical College aims to enhance students' understanding, vocal performance, and cultural appreciation of Northern Shaanxi folk songs while supporting the inheritance of this rich regional heritage. The course begins with an exploration of the cultural background and musical characteristics of Northern Shaanxi folk songs, helping students gain insight into their historical roots and artistic essence. Singing techniques—including breathing methods, vocalization styles, and enunciation skills—are systematically taught and reinforced through repeated practice. Additionally, students are exposed to ensemble singing, stylistic innovation, and stage performance to expand their artistic perspective. The teaching process integrates diverse strategies such as video presentations, case analysis, group discussions, and hands-on rehearsals to stimulate student engagement and foster active learning. At the conclusion of the course, students demonstrate their learning through a final performance, which serves as both a practical evaluation and a reflective opportunity. This is followed by a comprehensive summary session to help students internalize the knowledge and deepen their emotional connection to the music. This instructional approach not only promotes musical skill development and cultural literacy but also serves as a valuable reference model for educators. It contributes meaningfully to the

systematic preservation and revitalization of Northern Shaanxi folk songs in contemporary music education.

Evaluating of Teaching Effectiveness at Ningxia Ethnic Vocational and Technical College Using the Northern Shaanxi folk Song Teaching Guidebook

From the results of three formative tests, it can be seen that students' grades are gradually improving. In the first test, no students reached the excellent level, and most of them were at the average level. In the second test, the number of students who obtained a good grade increased significantly, reaching 6, while the number of students with a moderate level decreased to 4. The average score increased to 70.3, indicating that the students have made some progress through learning. By the third test, the number of students with good grades had further increased to 8, while there were only 2 students with moderate levels. The average score had increased to 74, indicating that with the advancement of teaching, students' mastery of knowledge and skills related to shaanxi northern folk songs has been improving, and their overall level is constantly improving.

Discussions

The "Shaanxi Northern Folk Song Teaching Guide" has played a crucial role in providing a structured framework for teaching. It comprehensively covers the cultural background, musical characteristics, and singing techniques of Northern Shaanxi folk songs. The detailed descriptions of the geographical, historical, and social factors influencing these songs have been particularly beneficial. For example, by learning about the arid landscapes and unique social structures of Northern Shaanxi, students can better understand the origin of the songs' passionate and earthy qualities. This cultural context not only deepens their appreciation of the music but also gives them a more profound understanding of the stories and emotions behind the lyrics. In terms of dialect teaching, the guidebook's theoretical explanations lack sufficient practical support. There is a dearth of interactive elements like recorded native - speaker conversations, dialect - specific tongue - twisters, or pronunciation - focused games. This makes it difficult for students to translate theoretical knowledge

into practical skills. Moreover, the guidebook could further explore the regional variations within the shaanxi northern dialect, as different areas may have distinct pronunciation and vocabulary, which would enrich students' understanding and authenticity in performance (Zhao, 2008).

Regarding the integration of tradition and innovation, the guidebook offers only a cursory treatment. It fails to provide in - depth case studies of successful adaptations, leaving students without a clear understanding of the creative processes and decision - making involved. Without practical examples and step - by - step guidance, students are left to experiment on their own, often resulting in adaptations that either lose the essence of the traditional songs or fail to resonate with modern audiences. Additionally, the guidebook could explore more deeply the potential of digital media and new musical technologies in the innovation of Northern Shaanxi folk songs, such as the use of electronic music production tools to enhance the soundscape while maintaining the core musical elements (Xu, 2022).

The guidebook seems to have a one - size - fits - all approach, neglecting the diverse learning styles of students. Some students may be visual learners who would benefit from more illustrations, diagrams, or video examples in the guidebook. Others may be kinesthetic learners and would prefer hands - on activities or physical demonstrations. By not catering to these different learning styles, the guidebook may be limiting the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. The integration of the culture of Northern Shaanxi folk songs into the teaching process has significantly enriched students' learning experience. It has not only deepened their understanding of the music but also had a profound impact on their cultural identity. By delving into the local customs, historical events, and values reflected in the songs, students have developed a stronger sense of connection to the cultural heritage of Northern Shaanxi. For example, learning about the role of folk songs in traditional festivals or family gatherings gives students a glimpse into the social fabric of the region, fostering a sense of respect and appreciation for the local culture. However, there is room for further deepening the cultural integration. Teachers could introduce more cross - cultural comparisons. Comparing Northern Shaanxi folk songs with other folk music forms in China, such as the folk songs of Yunnan or the ballads of Inner Mongolia, can help students identify the unique

features of Northern Shaanxi folk songs, such as its distinct melodic patterns and lyrical themes (Niu, 2024). Comparing them with folk music from around the world, like Irish folk songs or African griot music, can also broaden students' horizons and enhance their understanding of the universality and diversity of folk music. Additionally, cross - cultural exploration could extend to the study of the influence of different art forms on Northern Shaanxi folk songs, such as how local dance forms or visual arts intersect with the music.

New Knowledges

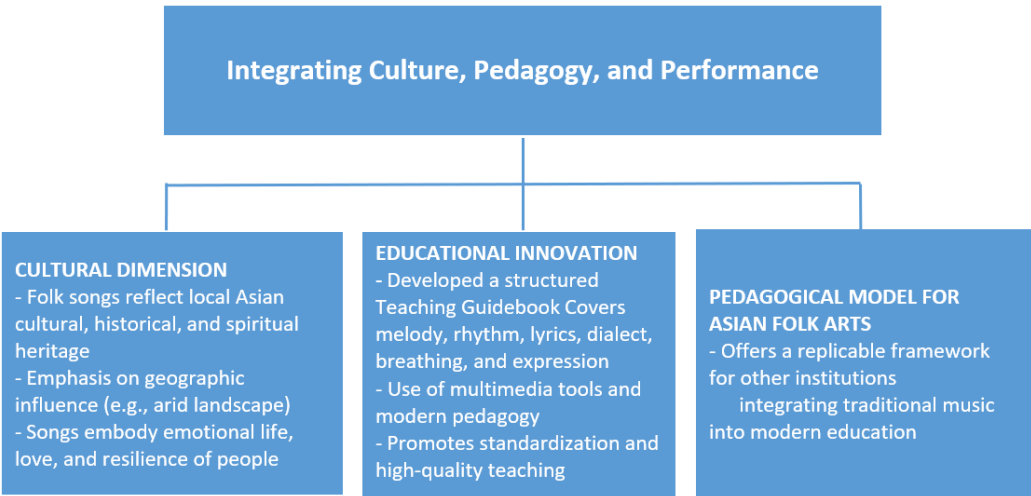


Figure 1: New Knowledges Diagram of Constructing of Teaching Guidebook of Northern Shaanxi Folk Songs at Ningxia Ethnic Vocational and Technical College.

Conclusions

This research demonstrates that the systematic integration of Northern Shaanxi folk songs into the music curriculum at Ningxia Ethnic Vocational and Technical College—through the construction, implementation, and evaluation of a dedicated teaching guidebook—has produced significant educational and cultural benefits. The transformation of teaching materials from simplistic notations to enriched, multi-dimensional resources has deepened students’ cultural understanding and enhanced their technical competence. The newly developed guidebook not only provides a structured and culturally grounded

framework for instruction but also incorporates practical methods and multimedia tools to support effective teaching and learning. Experimental application of the guidebook with first-year students revealed improvements in both musical proficiency and cultural appreciation, supported by diversified instructional strategies and active student engagement. Most notably, the evaluation of teaching effectiveness through progressive testing confirmed measurable gains in student performance and skill acquisition over time. The increase in average scores and the rise in the number of students achieving higher performance levels clearly reflect the positive impact of the guidebook on learning outcomes. Collectively, these findings affirm the value of using regionally focused, pedagogically sound materials in music education, and highlight the importance of preserving and revitalizing traditional folk culture in contemporary academic settings. This research not only contributes to the ongoing development of music pedagogy but also offers a replicable model for integrating ethnic cultural heritage into vocational education.

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