



A Study of Shandong Folk Song Teaching at Shandong Media Vocational College in Shandong Province

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Abstract

This study aims to Survey on the Shandong Folk song teaching at Shandong Media Vocational College in Shandong Province. This research will adopt a qualitative research approach; qualitative data will be collected through interviews, focus groups, and observations. Interviews and focus groups will be carried out using semi-structured question guides. This approach allows for flexibility, enabling the exploration of unanticipated but relevant topics that may arise during the interaction with participants. At the same time, it ensures that key topics, such as students' understanding of the cultural background of Shandong folk songs, their personal experiences in learning these songs, and their suggestions for improving the teaching, are covered. Observations will be systematically recorded in educational settings. The results show that the most important aspect of teaching Shandong folk songs is the preservation and transmission of cultural charm through the integration of local dialect and traditional vocal techniques. This emphasis on dialect enriches the musical expression, ensuring authenticity in performance. Mastering regional vocal ornaments distinguishes authentic folk performances and connects students not only to the music but also to their cultural heritage. The curriculum fosters cultural confidence by deepening emotional connections to the songs and their historical significance. Additionally, while modern teaching methods and technology are incorporated, maintaining the authenticity of folk traditions is paramount, allowing Shandong's cultural identity to thrive as a living art form.

Keywords: Survey, Shandong Folk song, Teaching

1. Introduction

The preservation and propagation of traditional Chinese ethnic vocal music are of paramount importance, especially in regions like Shandong Province, which is steeped in a rich tapestry of cultural heritage. Among the institutions at the forefront of this cultural endeavor is Shandong Media Vocational College, situated in a locale brimming with artistic vitality. The college's role in cultivating musicians and safeguarding these musical legacies is indispensable. Nonetheless, the pedagogy of Chinese ethnic vocal music is fraught with challenges, such as the absence of standardized curricula, insufficient teaching resources, and a diminishing interest among the younger demographic. mentioned in his research on Shandong vocal music “Despite these impediments, the college persists in its mission to sustain and elevate the status of this art form within its educational programs. The current study is poised to delve into these efforts and propose strategies to bolster the teaching and appreciation of Chinese ethnic vocal

music at Shandong Media Vocational College.”

The province of Shandong, renowned for its historical significance and cultural diversity, has long been a cradle for various forms of traditional music. Among these, Shandong folk songs hold a special place, reflecting the local customs, language, and spirit of the people. Shandong Media Vocational College, as an educational institution deeply rooted in this cultural milieu, has the responsibility to ensure that these musical traditions are not only preserved but also brought to life in contemporary contexts.

However, the teaching of Shandong folk songs and Chinese ethnic vocal music in general is not without its challenges. The absence of a unified and standardized curriculum can lead to inconsistencies in the quality and depth of education provided. Furthermore, the scarcity of teaching resources, including experienced instructors and updated materials, can hinder the learning process. Perhaps one of the most pressing issues is the waning interest among younger students, who may find traditional music less appealing compared to modern genres. The purpose of this study is to scrutinize the current state of Shandong folk song teaching at Shandong Media Vocational College. It aims to identify the specific issues that impede the effective transmission of this musical tradition and to explore potential solutions. The ultimate goal is to provide recommendations that will enhance the teaching methodologies, resource allocation, and student engagement in the study and performance of Shandong folk songs.

In conclusion, this research seeks to lay the groundwork for future studies by providing a detailed survey of the current state of Shandong folk song teaching at Shandong Media Vocational College. By identifying and addressing the problems encountered, the study aims to contribute to the preservation and revitalization of this important aspect of Chinese cultural heritage.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Historical and Cultural Value of Shandong Folk Songs

Shandong folk songs are deeply rooted in the province's history, dating back to ancient times when they were used for various purposes, including agricultural work, rituals, and entertainment. These songs encapsulate the local customs, beliefs, and social practices, offering a unique window into the lives and experiences of the people of Shandong. As noted by Zhang (2010), "Shandong folk songs are a mirror reflecting the social life and spiritual world of the Shandong people" (p. 45). The melodies and lyrics of these songs often carry stories of historical events, moral teachings, and philosophical reflections, making them an invaluable part of China's intangible cultural heritage.

The cultural value of Shandong folk songs extends beyond their historical significance. They serve as a means of cultural expression and communication, fostering a sense of community and shared identity among the people of Shandong. As Wang (2015) points out, "Folk songs are not just about music; they are about the people, their lives, and their stories" (p. 67). The preservation and teaching of these songs are, therefore, crucial for maintaining cultural diversity and promoting intergenerational knowledge transfer.

2.2 Educational Orientation and Objectives of Shandong Media Vocational College

Shandong Media Vocational College, as an educational institution, plays a pivotal role in the training of media professionals and the preservation of cultural heritage. The college's educational orientation is geared towards practical skills development, innovation, and cultural education, aiming to produce well-rounded graduates who are not only technically proficient but also culturally aware. According to the college's mission statement, "We are committed to fostering talent that can lead in the media industry while preserving and

promoting China's rich cultural heritage" (Shandong Media Vocational College, 2021).

The objectives of Shandong Media Vocational College include providing students with a comprehensive understanding of traditional arts, such as Shandong folk songs, and equipping them with the skills necessary to contribute to the cultural sector. The integration of folk song teaching into the curriculum reflects the college's dedication to cultural education and its recognition of the importance of traditional music in contemporary society. As Li (2018) suggests, "Educational institutions like Shandong Media Vocational College are instrumental in bridging the gap between tradition and modernity by incorporating folk music education into their programs" (p. 89).

In conclusion, the study of Shandong folk song teaching at Shandong Media Vocational College is not merely an academic exercise but a critical endeavor to preserve a vital aspect of China's cultural heritage. By understanding the historical and cultural significance of Shandong folk songs and the educational goals of the college, this research aims to contribute to the broader efforts of cultural preservation and education, ensuring that these valuable traditions continue to thrive

3. Research Methodology

This paper employs quantitative research methods, using a Qualitative data will be collected through interviews, focus groups, and observations. Interviews and focus groups will be carried out using semi - structured question guides. This approach allows for flexibility, enabling the exploration of unanticipated but relevant topics that may arise during the interaction with participants. At the same time, it ensures that key topics, such as students' understanding of the cultural background of Shandong Folk songs, their personal experiences in learning these songs, and their suggestions for improving the teaching, are covered. Observations will be systematically recorded in educational settings. Both verbal and non - verbal interactions, like students' body language during class, their participation in group activities related to Shandong Folk song teaching, will be captured. This qualitative data will offer rich, in - depth insights into the participants' experiences and perspectives.

1. Key informants Characteristics and Data Collection

1.1 Criteria of the key informant: the key informant must meet with the following criteria:

1.1.1 All of them have more than ten years of vocal music teaching experience

1.1.2 All have the title of associate professor or above

1.1.3 They are all judges and experts of the Vocal Music Competition in Shandong Province or the Vocal Music Development Seminar Forum

1) Professor Dr. Wei Fanjian

2) Professor Dr.Song Chunyan

3) Professor Dr. Jia Chunlei

1.2 Data collection

The data collection procedure will be conducted in several stages to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data:

1.2.1 Pre-testing: Before the main data collection, a pilot study will be conducted using a small sample to test the research instruments for clarity and relevance.

1.2.2 Administration of Questionnaires: The questionnaires will be distributed to the selected participants during class time or through an online platform, ensuring anonymity and encouraging honest responses.

1.2.3 Conducting Interviews: Interviews will be scheduled at convenient times for the participants, recorded with their permission, and transcribed for analysis.

1.2.4 Observations: Observations will be conducted in a non-intrusive manner, with permission from the participants, and detailed field notes will be taken.

1.2.5 Document Collection: Relevant documents will be gathered from the college's archives and from individual teachers, ensuring that all materials are properly cataloged for analysis.

By following this structured approach to data collection, the study aims to gather a rich and diverse set of data that will provide a comprehensive understanding of the teaching of Chinese ethnic vocal music at Shandong Media Vocational College.

2. Measurements & Research tool

1) Interview

This study employs an interview form as its primary research tool to collect qualitative data on the teaching of Shandong folk songs at Shandong Media Vocational College. The form is divided into an introduction section, which establishes rapport and outlines the study's purpose, and a body section with demographic information, structured questions, and open-ended questions. The demographic section gathers basic participant data, while the structured questions focus on specific aspects of teaching and learning, ensuring consistent and comparable responses. Open-ended questions allow for deeper exploration of experiences and opinions, providing insights beyond structured responses. The form is user-friendly, designed for face-to-face administration, and includes space for notes to aid in analysis.

2) Observation.

The research tool employed in this study is the observation form, which is designed to systematically record the teaching practices of Shandong folk songs at Shandong Media Vocational College. The observation form is structured to capture various aspects of the teaching process, including the teacher's instructional methods, the students' engagement levels, and the overall classroom environment. The form is divided into several distinct sections, each focusing on a different aspect of the observation.

The first section of the observation form is dedicated to the teacher's behavior and instructional strategies. It includes categories such as the use of multimedia resources, the incorporation of traditional teaching aids, and the frequency of interactive activities. This section aims to understand how teachers deliver content and engage students in the learning process.

The second section focuses on the students' responses and participation. It observes the students' attentiveness, participation in discussions or activities, and their interaction with the teacher and peers. This part of the form helps to assess the level of student engagement and the effectiveness of the teaching methods.

The third section of the observation form is dedicated to the classroom environment and atmosphere. It notes the physical setup of the classroom, the use of space, and the overall mood during the lessons. This section aims to understand how the environment might influence the teaching and learning of Shandong folk songs.

The observation form includes a section for miscellaneous notes, where the observer can record any other relevant information that does not fit into the predefined categories. This might include unique teaching practices, spontaneous student reactions, or any other noteworthy events that occur during the observation period.

To ensure consistency and reliability, the observation form also includes a set of guiding questions or topics for each section. These topics are designed to prompt the observer to focus on specific elements of the teaching and learning process. For example, under the teacher's behavior section, topics might include "How does the teacher introduce new folk songs?" or "What methods are used to correct students' singing techniques?"

3. Analytical Method

The data analysis phase of this research is critical for interpreting the information gathered from the survey and interviews conducted at Shandong Media Vocational College. The data collected will be organized and analyzed to address the research questions effectively. The following steps will be taken to ensure a thorough and accurate analysis:

3.1 Data Cleaning: The raw data will be reviewed for any inconsistencies or errors. This includes checking for incomplete surveys, outliers, and any other irregularities that may affect the analysis.

3.2. Qualitative Analysis: Responses from open-ended questions and interviews will be transcribed and coded. Thematic analysis will be used to identify common themes and patterns that emerge from the qualitative data. This will help in understanding the challenges faced by the college in teaching Chinese ethnic vocal music, the contributions to preserving traditional music, and the impact of curricula and resources.

Through this structured approach to data analysis, the research aims to provide a detailed understanding of the current state of Shandong Folk song teaching at Shandong Media Vocational College, the challenges it faces, its contributions to traditional music preservation, and the impact of its curricula and resources on the teaching of Chinese ethnic vocal music.

4. Results

1. The Shandong Folk song teaching at Shandong Media Vocational College in Shandong Province

The result of interview with key informant.

This study adopts a semi-structured interview method and takes the Shandong Folk Song course at Shandong Media Vocational College as a case study, aiming to explore in depth the inheritance mode and innovative path of Shandong ethnic vocal development in contemporary higher vocational education. The interviewees are course leaders and senior professors with rich teaching experience, and through dialogue, they gain profound insights into course construction and teaching practice. The interview results are as follows:

Part 1 Curriculum and Teaching

The Shandong folk song curriculum structured at Shandong Media Vocational College.

The "three-tier integrated framework" of the Shandong folk song curriculum at Shandong Media Vocational College consists of theory, practice, and cultural immersion three progressive modules, and their connection is systematic and mutually reinforcing: Theoretical Module: Theory as the foundation for the other two tiers. The theory module provides core knowledge such as the historical origin, melodic characteristics, and lyrical connotations of Shandong folk songs. This theoretical reserve enables students to understand the artistic logic behind folk song singing in the practice module, and also helps them grasp the cultural background of folk songs in the cultural immersion module, avoiding superficial learning of skills or culture.

Cultural Extension Module: Cultural immersion as the sublimation of theory and practice. The cultural immersion module, which may include activities such as visiting folk song inheritors, participating in local folk-art festivals, and sorting out folk song manuscripts, enables students to step out of the classroom and touch the living soil of Shandong folk songs. This immersive experience not only deepens students' understanding of theoretical knowledge but also improves their practical performance level because only by understanding the cultural context behind the songs can they sing with more emotion and connotation, and finally realize the organic integration of "knowing, singing, and understanding" folk songs.



In short, the three tiers are not isolated and parallel, but a progressive and integrated system: theory guides practice and culture, practice verifies theory and carries culture, and cultural immersion enriches theory and elevates practice.

The main teaching objectives in the Shandong folk song courses.

The teaching objectives of the Shandong folk song curriculum are structured around three interconnected pillars, encapsulated as “transmitting skills, inheriting culture, and inspiring innovation.” These pillars collectively guide the pedagogical design and outcomes of the course. The program aims to equip students with proficiency in region-specific vocal techniques, including the nuanced use of ornamentation and authentic dialect pronunciation, enabling them to perform Shandong folk songs with technical accuracy and stylistic fidelity.

Cultural Literacy: Beyond technical mastery, the curriculum seeks to cultivate a profound appreciation of the social, historical, and emotional dimensions inherent in folk songs. Students are encouraged to engage with the narratives, values, and lived experiences that these songs embody, thereby deepening their connection to the cultural heritage.

Creative Application: In line with contemporary educational and artistic trends, the course encourages students to reinterpret and adapt traditional folk material through modern media and innovative performative frameworks. This objective prepares learners to contribute actively to the evolving cultural landscape, bridging tradition with contemporary expression.

The college ensure the curriculum meets the needs of modern students.

The college has formulated and implemented a scientific and systematic dynamic and responsive curriculum development strategy, which runs through the whole process of curriculum design, operation and optimization, and effectively bridges the gap between traditional folk song teaching and the learning demands of contemporary students.

The first core measure is regular student feedback collection, which relies on a multi-dimensional data collection system to capture students' real learning voices. Specifically, the college uses structured questionnaires to conduct large-scale investigations on the relevance of curriculum content, the effectiveness of teaching methods, and the integration of digital technology, so as to obtain quantitative data support for curriculum adjustment; organizes focus group discussions with students of different grades and professional directions as participants, and digs into the deep-seated needs and opinions behind the data through face-to-face communication; at the same time, it takes advantage of course evaluation platforms—a standardized and institutionalized feedback tool—to collect students' targeted evaluations of each teaching link after the end of each semester. These three tools complement each other, combining quantitative data and qualitative opinions to ensure that the feedback information is comprehensive, accurate and objective.

Second, the college actively promotes in-depth industry collaboration, establishing long-term cooperative relations with local cultural institutions, mainstream media companies and intangible cultural heritage protection and inheritance units. These cooperative partners not only provide the curriculum with the latest industry development trends and practical job demands, but also send front-line professionals to participate in curriculum design and teaching practice, which ensures that the teaching content is closely connected with the real cultural industry market and helps students grasp the emerging development opportunities in the field of folk culture inheritance and innovation.

Third, the college adopts a modular and flexible curriculum design concept, setting up a number of optional courses closely related to modern cultural industry development on the basis of compulsory core courses. Typical optional modules include and: the former focuses on training students to use digital technology for the sorting, storage and management of folk song resources, while the latter focuses on improving students' practical ability in field recording and sound post-processing. This flexible module setting breaks the rigid teaching mode of traditional courses, allowing students to independently choose learning content according to



their own interests and career development plans, and truly realize the personalized customization of learning paths. Fourth, the college attaches great importance to technology integration in teaching practice, integrating a variety of digital tools, audio-visual production technology and online teaching platforms into daily teaching. For example, teachers use professional audio editing software to guide students to analyze the melody structure of Shandong folk songs, adopt video shooting and editing technology to record students' singing practice and stage performance, and rely on online learning platforms to build a resource library of folk song materials and interactive discussion areas. These digital teaching methods are highly compatible with the learning habits of digitally native learners, effectively enhancing students' learning enthusiasm and participation.

Part 2 Teaching Methods

The traditional teaching methods are used in folk song classes.

The time-honored pedagogical approach of "oral transmission with heart-to-heart guidance" as the core methodology, which draws on the essence of the traditional master-apprentice teaching model and places paramount emphasis on subtle artistic imitation and profound emotional resonance. The key teaching methods are as follows:

Demonstration and Imitation: Instructors deliver line-by-line, nuanced demonstrations of folk song pieces, guiding students to meticulously replicate the distinctive dialectal pronunciation, delicate melodic ornamentation, and rhythmic breathing techniques that define the regional folk song style.

Score and Notation Integration: To facilitate a deeper comprehension of melodic frameworks and time-honored tonal conventions, the course integrates the study of ancient Chinese music notation systems such as Gongchepeu with modern standard music notation, enabling students to bridge the gap between traditional musical heritage and contemporary music theory.

Contextual Immersion: Classroom teaching is closely intertwined with vivid physical gestures, the rhythmic cadence of traditional labor, and the cultural rituals tied to different seasons. This immersive approach helps students vividly visualize and emotionally connect with the original scenarios where these folk songs were born and performed, thereby capturing the authentic spirit of the music.

The role does cultural context play in teaching methods.

Cultural context is not a peripheral supplement but the very soul of folk song pedagogy, serving as the core thread that runs through the entire teaching process. We embed cultural context into every facet of instruction through the following targeted approaches:

Authentic Scenario Re-creation: When teaching labor-intensive folk genres such as Haozi (work songs), students are guided to simulate the coordinated physical movements of traditional collective labor such as rice planting, boat hauling, or stone lifting. This hands-on simulation enables them to deeply internalize the intrinsic connection between the rhythmic cadence of the songs and the physical exertion of labor, grasping how music evolved as a practical tool to unify effort and lift spirits. **Immersive Ethnographic Engagement:** Learners are encouraged to step out of the classroom and engage in fieldwork: conducting in-depth interviews with local elders and veteran folk song inheritors, or participating in vibrant community folk festivals and cultural rituals. Through these experiences, they document living folk song traditions firsthand, while gaining profound insights into the social connotations and emotional significance that these songs hold within local communities. **Critical Cultural Reflection and Dialogue:** Classroom discussions revolve around thought-provoking topics including cultural appropriation, the authenticity of folk song adaptations, and the ethical representation of traditional music in modern contexts. These dialogues guide students to

develop a balanced perspective one that honors the cultural roots of folk songs while empowering them to exercise creative agency with respect and discernment.

Interdisciplinary Integration: The curriculum forges organic connections with disciplines such as ethnomusicology, regional dialectology, and social history. By drawing on these interdisciplinary perspectives, it unveils how folk songs act as living "cultural codes" that encode the unique regional identities, collective values, and shared historical memories of the communities that created them.

Part 3 Teaching Media / Tools

The musical instruments are used as teaching tools in folk song classes.

The integrate traditional musical instruments with adaptive teaching-friendly ones to construct a learning atmosphere that is both culturally authentic and pedagogically flexible. **Core Accompaniment Instruments:** Traditional plucked string instruments including the zhuiqin, liuqin, and pipa are deployed to highlight the distinctive regional vocal timbres and melodic cadences of folk songs, anchoring learners in the authentic sonic landscape of the genre.

Rhythm and Percussion Tools: Classic percussive instruments such as wooden clappers (bangzi), porcelain drums, and cymbals serve as essential aids for students to internalize the rhythmic frameworks embedded in labor chants and festive folk tunes, fostering a intuitive grasp of folk music's rhythmic essence. **Student-Friendly Sound makers:** Entry-level instruments with low technical thresholds such as the clay ocarina (xun) and the jaw harp (kouxian) are introduced to enable beginners to join ensemble performances at an early stage, effectively lowering learning barriers while enhancing their active engagement and sense of accomplishment.

Improvisational "Found Sound" Props: On occasion, everyday items like ceramic bowls, earthen tiles, and farming implements are incorporated into teaching activities. This practice vividly demonstrates how folk music has historically drawn on readily available, ordinary materials to create its unique and down-to-earth musical expressions.

Audio-visual equipment utilized in the teaching process.

Audio-visual technology acts as both a reflective mirror and a precision microscope in facilitating students' artistic development, bridging the gap between theoretical learning and practical mastery of folk music. **Multi-Angle Recording Systems:** High-definition cameras are strategically positioned to capture every detail of students' performances—from their full-body posture and expressive facial cues to the subtle dynamics of breath control. These recordings provide instructors with a comprehensive basis for delivering targeted, nuanced feedback on stage presence and performance delivery. **Spectrogram Analysis Software:** Professional tools such as Sonic Visualiser translate abstract vocal techniques into intuitive visual graphs. By mapping elements like vibrato width, pitch stability, and tonal resonance, the software demystifies complex vocal mechanics, allowing students to see and analyze their singing in a concrete, measurable way.

Immersive Playback Environments: Surround-sound systems paired with large projection screens are employed to recreate vivid, context-rich scenarios—whether it is the lively bustle of a folk festival or the rustic serenity of a fieldwork site. This classroom-based immersion transports students into the authentic cultural backdrop of folk songs, deepening their emotional and contextual understanding of the music. **Real-Time Cloud Collaboration Platforms:** Cloud-based multi-track recording software enables seamless remote collaboration among students. They can jointly arrange traditional folk melodies, experiment with digital production techniques, and weave modern audio elements into classic tunes, fostering creative innovation while preserving the core essence of folk music.

The digital resources support the folk song curriculum.



We have constructed a layered, scaffolded digital ecosystem that not only safeguards the authenticity of folk music traditions but also empowers systematic study and creative innovation within this cultural framework. Localized Folk Song Digital Archives: The dedicated Shandong Folk Song Digital Repository serves as a comprehensive cultural archive, offering curated access to a wealth of precious resources—including rare historical audio recordings, meticulously annotated musical scores, and vivid documentary footage captured from on-site field research. This repository preserves the raw, authentic essence of regional folk songs while making these heritage materials readily accessible for academic inquiry and teaching practice.

Immersive Virtual Reality (VR) Experiences: Cutting-edge VR technology enables students to "step into" meticulously reconstructed traditional ritual spaces, such as a vibrant Shandong-style wedding ceremony. By being fully immersed in these lifelike scenarios, students can observe firsthand how folk songs intertwine with bodily movements, traditional costumes, and the intricate social dynamics of the occasion, gaining a holistic understanding of music's cultural context. **Interactive Mobile Applications:** A suite of user-friendly mobile apps enriches the learning experience in diverse ways. Apps like Folk Song Map geotag regional folk songs to their exact places of origin, allowing students to trace the geographic roots and cultural evolution of each piece; meanwhile, tools such as Vocal Coach Lite deliver real-time, data-driven feedback on dialect pronunciation nuances and vocal pitch accuracy, turning fragmented practice into targeted skill refinement.

Part 4 Classroom Environment

The physical classroom space adapted for folk song teaching.

The classroom is ingeniously designed as a flexible, culturally resonant acoustic ecosystem one that adapts dynamically to teaching goals while immersing learners in the authentic cultural context of folk music. Key customizations are as follows:

Modular Furniture Configuration: Fixed desks and chairs are replaced with lightweight movable mats and height-adjustable standing platforms, enabling swift transitions between instructional modes from formal lectures and intimate circle-singing sessions to dynamic group rehearsals, without disrupting the classroom's flow. **Targeted Acoustic Optimization:** Sound-absorbing panels are strategically installed alongside natural wooden flooring to strike an ideal balance of reverberation: the setup enhances the richness of solo vocal performances and the harmony of ensemble pieces alike, while effectively minimizing distracting external noise interference. **Cultural Artifact Display Zones:** Dedicated corner exhibits showcase a curated collection of traditional musical instruments, intricately crafted folk costumes, and fieldwork relics such as vintage harvest tools and ritual paraphernalia. This transforms the classroom into a living cultural archive, allowing students to engage with tangible heritage items and deepen their connection to folk music's roots.

Seamless Technology Integration Zones: Wall-mounted high-definition monitors, compact portable recording booths, and VR headsets are integrated unobtrusively into the classroom layout. These tools are readily accessible for on-demand use during creative teaching exercises, bridging the gap between physical learning spaces and digital educational resources.

The typical class size for folk song courses.

Tiered learning scale tailored to the distinct objectives of different course modules, ensuring that personalized guidance remains at the core of every teaching session. **Core Practice Sessions:** The class size is strictly capped at 15–18 students. This compact cohort allows instructors to deliver granular vocal coaching, offer targeted, individualized feedback on technique and expression, and foster a collaborative atmosphere where every student can receive focused attention. **Theory and Cultural Studies Lectures:** These sessions accommodate a moderately larger group 25–30 students, striking a balance between knowledge dissemination



efficiency and interactive learning. To maintain engagement and depth of discussion, the whole cohort is frequently divided into smaller breakout groups for thematic exchanges and academic deliberation.

Fieldwork Excursions and Master Workshops: Participation is limited to an exclusive group of 8–12 students. This streamlined size facilitates unobstructed, close interaction with veteran folk music practitioners and local heritage bearers, enabling students to absorb authentic skills and cultural insights in a highly immersive, one-on-one-like setting. This tiered class size structure optimizes the allocation of teaching resources while fully meeting the pedagogical demands of nuanced, student-centered instruction across all course segments.

The learning atmosphere affect student participation.

The classroom learning atmosphere functions as an invisible yet powerful scaffold for driving active student participation, carefully cultivated through a series of targeted, student-centric strategies: **Psychological Safety Rituals:** Each class opens with inclusive warm-up activities, such as synchronized collective breathing exercises or casual "story-sharing circles" where students exchange anecdotes related to folk music. These rituals effectively ease performance anxiety, dissolve inhibitions, and create a non-judgmental space especially beneficial for beginners who feel hesitant about singing in public.

Dynamic Role-Rotation Mechanisms: Students are encouraged to take turns assuming diverse roles throughout the learning process: stepping into the spotlight as lead singers, providing harmonic support as accompanists, or sharing cultural backgrounds as narrators of folk song origins. This rotating model fosters a strong sense of shared ownership, transforming passive learners into active co-creators of the classroom experience. **Controlled Vulnerability Modeling by Instructors:** Teachers intentionally demystify the path of artistic growth by sharing their own past learning struggles such as the arduous process of mastering a complex vocal ornament or a region-specific folk tune technique. This practice normalizes setbacks and frames challenges as an integral, valuable part of the journey toward musical proficiency. When students find themselves in an environment where they feel simultaneously challenged and cherished, their participation transcends mere perfunctory performance; it evolves into a genuine, heartfelt dialogue with folk music and its rich cultural heritage.

Part 5 Evaluation and Assessment

The criteria are used to assess students' folk song performance.

Trinity Evaluation Framework that conducts a comprehensive assessment of artistic expression through three interconnected dimensions: technical proficiency, artistic interpretation, and cultural resonance, ensuring that technical skills are never divorced from the emotional and cultural essence of folk music. **Technical Accuracy (Accounting for 40%):** This dimension focuses on the foundational vocal skills required for authentic folk song performance, including pitch precision, rhythmic stability, accurate dialect articulation, refined breath control, and strict adherence to the distinctive regional stylistic ornaments that define the character of each piece.

Artistic Interpretation (Accounting for 40%): Scoring centers on the student's capacity to infuse the song with personal yet appropriate expression, covering the depth of emotional conveyance, the nuanced use of dynamic contrasts, the creativity of melodic phrasing, the naturalness of stage presence, and the ability to vividly communicate the song's inherent narrative or thematic core.

Cultural Resonance (Accounting for 20%): This criterion evaluates the student's grasp of the folk song's cultural roots, including their demonstrated understanding of the song's social origins and historical background, its symbolic meanings in traditional contexts, and the appropriateness of any innovative adaptations they introduce to the piece.



This three-pronged framework guarantees that technical mastery functions as a means to serve expressive and cultural objectives, rather than being treated as an isolated, standalone skill.

The traditional elements evaluated in student performances.

Traditional elements embedded in students' performances are assessed through a dual-pronged approach that combines qualitative cultural insight with systematic structured analysis, ensuring an authentic and comprehensive evaluation of how well learners inherit and interpret folk music traditions.

Heritage Practitioner Review: Esteemed local inheritors of intangible cultural heritage are invited to conduct blind listening evaluations of students' performances. Drawing on their decades of firsthand experience, these practitioners provide detailed written feedback focusing on the authenticity of vocal timbre, the accuracy of lyrical intonation, and the fidelity to region-specific singing conventions that define the folk song's essence.

Comparative Audio Analysis: Students are guided to conduct a targeted comparative study, juxtaposing their own performance recordings with authoritative archival versions of the same folk songs. This exercise requires them to identify and document specific gaps in stylistic execution such as the nuances of vocal ornamentation, the subtleties of dialect inflection, and the rhythmic phrasing that underpins the song's traditional character.

"Cultural Intention" Reflective Journals: Learners are required to submit in-depth reflective journals that detail their independent research into the song's historical background, social context, and cultural connotations. The journals also need to articulate how this research informed their specific performance choices, demonstrating a conscious understanding of traditional elements rather than a superficial imitation.

The methods are used for continuous assessment throughout the course.

The implement a longitudinal, process-focused assessment approach that prioritizes the tracking of sustained growth over time, rather than relying solely on one-off evaluations to measure students' progress.

Digital Learning Portfolios: Students compile and curate a comprehensive semester-long portfolio, which serves as a dynamic record of their learning journey. This collection encompasses a sequential archive of audio and video performance recordings, detailed rehearsal notes, structured peer feedback, and iterative revisions of their folk song renditions—capturing every step of their skill refinement and artistic evolution. **Low-Stakes Milestone Performances:** Frequent, pressure-free showcase opportunities such as intimate Folk Song Coffee House sessions or themed mini-recitals are organized throughout the course. These events allow students to demonstrate incremental progress in a relaxed, supportive setting, with an emphasis on growth rather than high-stakes grading, fostering confidence and a willingness to experiment. **360-Degree Holistic Feedback Mechanism:** A multi-perspective feedback system is integrated into the assessment process, combining structured peer evaluations, guided self-assessments using standardized rubrics, and personalized narrative feedback from instructors. This comprehensive feedback loop offers a well-rounded, objective view of each student's strengths, areas for improvement, and overall developmental trajectory.

Part 6 Activities

The extracurricular activities support folk song learning.

The extracurricular activities as organic extensions of classroom learning initiatives that prioritize immersive cultural engagement and student-led exploration, transforming learners from passive recipients of knowledge into active participants in the preservation and innovation of folk music heritage. **Field Recording Expeditions:** Students embark on targeted field trips to rural communities, timed to coincide with vibrant cultural events such as harvest festivals and temple fairs. During these expeditions, they take on the role of young ethnomusicologists, documenting live folk song performances, conducting oral history



interviews with veteran folk singers to preserve their personal musical narratives, and capturing the ambient contextual soundscapes that give these songs their authentic cultural roots. Interdisciplinary "Folk Song Labs": We organize collaborative, cross-departmental workshops that bring together folk song students with peers from film, animation, and digital media disciplines. Centered on folk music as a core narrative thread, these labs serve as creative incubators where participants experiment with transmedia storytelling blending vocal performances with visual art, short films, and digital installations to reimagine folk songs for modern audiences.

Community Co-Creation Projects: Through partnerships with local cultural centers, students engage in meaningful community outreach initiatives. They lend their skills to help elderly residents digitize and archive their private collections of folk songs preserving precious, often overlooked musical heritage and collaborate with community members to co-create original folk-inspired songs that reflect the rhythms and stories of contemporary rural life. These extracurricular endeavors seamlessly bridge the gap between institutional classroom learning and living folk music heritage, empowering students to evolve into active contributors rather than passive recipients of this timeless cultural tradition.

Practical performance opportunities integrated into the curriculum.

Practical performance is framed as a dual vehicle for applied research and cultural communication, rather than a mere showcase of skills. It is systematically embedded into the curriculum through a tiered, scenario-rich approach that caters to learners at all stages of development: Simulated Authentic Cultural Spaces: Classrooms are periodically reimaged and transformed into immersive, scenario-based performance venues including traditional teahouse stages, lively village squares, and solemn ritual sites. Invited local community members are invited as audience members, allowing students to perform in settings that mirror the authentic cultural contexts of folk songs, and to receive feedback rooted in real-life folk music traditions.

Staged Performance Progression System: A structured, three-level ladder system guides students' performance growth in a gradual, confidence-building manner:

Level 1: Intimate in-class mini-recitals, focused on peer feedback and foundational skill polishing in a low-pressure environment.

Level 2: Visible campus-level showcases, such as participation in university cultural festivals and cross-department collaborative events, expanding students' performance scope and audience reach.

Level 3: Professional off-campus platforms, including intangible cultural heritage promotion events, local tourism festivals, and online digital streaming concerts, where students engage with broader public audiences and represent the course's cultural mission.

Documentary Performance Tasks: Beyond delivering performances themselves, students are tasked with producing accompanying short documentaries that unpack the cultural background, historical origins, and symbolic meanings of their selected repertoire. These documentaries are shared via the college's official social media channels, turning each performance into a platform for cultural dissemination and deepening students' own contextual understanding of the music they perform.

Cultural events play in student development.

Cultural events function as transformative thresholds vital junctures where classroom-acquired academic knowledge converges with personal growth and social identity construction, guiding students to move beyond rote learning toward a holistic grasp of folk music's cultural essence. Embodying Cultural Cycles: Active participation in seasonally rooted cultural events such as performing spring ploughing ballads during the Qingming Festival or singing moon-admiring melodies at the Mid-Autumn Festival allows students to deeply internalize the intrinsic, symbiotic bond between folk music and the ecological rhythms of

nature, as well as the temporal cadences of traditional life. These experiences turn abstract concepts of "music as a reflection of life" into tangible, sensory realities.

Negotiating Tradition and Innovation: Events like the curated Future Folk Festivals which bring together folk song students and electronic musicians for cross-genre collaborations present a creative challenge that pushes students to critically examine and articulate their own artistic stances on cultural continuity and innovation. They learn to balance the preservation of folk music's core traditions with bold, contemporary reinterpretations that resonate with modern audiences. **Building Ethnocultural Empathy:** Preparing and performing folk songs for community-specific events, such as traditional weddings or funerals, demands far more than technical proficiency. It requires students to delve into the unspoken social codes, emotional nuances, and cultural connotations embedded in these rituals, thereby cultivating cultural sensitivity as a core professional competence that complements their vocal skills.

Ultimately, these immersive cultural event experiences catalyze a profound transformation: they elevate students from passive learners of folk songs to passionate, informed ambassadors of living cultural heritage, armed with both refined technical prowess and keen intercultural discernment.

Part 7 Student Engagement and Motivation

The strategies are used to maintain student interest in folk songs.

Cultural Cross-Pollination Projects: Students are encouraged to remix classic folk melodies with the modern music genres they love from crafting vibrant folk-hop tracks to composing video game scores using traditional instruments like the pipa or erhu. These projects vividly demonstrate that folk music is not a static relic of the past, but a living, adaptable art form capable of thriving in contemporary creative landscapes. **Gamified Micro-Challenge Systems:** A dedicated class app delivers bite-sized, fun tasks on a weekly basis, turning routine practice into an interactive adventure. Examples include challenges like "Record a 30-second folk lullaby using only everyday objects from your kitchen" or "Trace three regional variants of a single folk song via digital archives and explain their cultural differences" each designed to spark curiosity while building practical research and creative skills.

Youth-Curated Course Content: Student-led committees take charge of designing themed class sessions, ensuring the curriculum reflects generational perspectives and interests. Topics range from "Folk Songs Featured in Contemporary Cinema" to "Gender and Labor Narratives in Traditional Ballads", empowering students to take ownership of their learning journey and explore folk music through lenses that feel personal and relevant. **Surprise "Heritage Keepers" Guest Sessions:** Unannounced visits from young, innovative cultural inheritors inject fresh energy into the classroom and shatter stereotypes of traditional culture as outdated or exclusively elder-driven. Past guests have included a 25-year-old paper-cutting artist who sets folk lyrics to electronic beats, proving that heritage can be reimagined and revitalized by the younger generation.

The students encouraged to practice independently.

Cultivate self-sustaining practice ecosystems centered on autonomy and intrinsic motivation, moving beyond rigid mandatory repetition to foster a lifelong habit of independent folk song learning. **Personalized "Practice Maps":** Every student is provided with a customized, visualized learning path tailored to their unique strengths and targeted improvement areas. These maps come with curated, highly relevant resources for instance, a prompt like "To refine your Shandong coastal dialect pronunciation: practice these three tongue-twister folk songs from Qingdao fishermen, which emphasize the region's distinctive vocal inflections" ensuring practice is targeted, efficient, and rooted in authentic folk music contexts.

Virtual Practice Communities: Dedicated social media groups are established to serve as 24/7 digital village squares, replicating the communal singing atmosphere of traditional folk



scenes in an online space. Here, students freely share short practice clips, exchange precise, timestamped feedback on vocal techniques and expression, and organize spontaneous virtual "singing nights" to practice together remotely, turning solitary practice into a collaborative, engaging experience. "Seed Funding" for Creative Independent Projects: Students have the opportunity to apply for small grants from the college's cultural heritage fund to develop self-initiated folk music projects. These projects such as producing a podcast series interviewing local rural singers, creating a folk song cover album with modern arrangements, or curating a digital archive of family folk tunes transform routine practice into purposeful creation, giving students a tangible, meaningful goal to work toward independently.

The methods help students connect with the cultural significance of folk songs.

Facilitate embodied, interdisciplinary meaning-making moving beyond rote textual analysis to help students forge visceral, lasting bonds with folk music's cultural roots, transforming songs from distant historical artifacts into resonant, living conversations worth preserving. Sensory Archaeology Exercises: Students engage in immersive, multi-sensory experiences that anchor folk songs to tangible cultural contexts. For example, they taste regional foods referenced in lyrics (like Shandong pancake rolls while learning the rhythmic cries of local jianbing vendors), handle replicated historical tools tied to labor-themed ballads, or trace the lyrical routes of travel folk songs using faded historical maps turning abstract verses into vivid, sensory memories.

Generational Dialogue Journals: After conducting in-depth interviews with elders about folk songs woven into their family memories, students collaborate to co-create detailed "memory maps". These maps link specific melodies to personal migration stories, long-lost traditional rituals, and intergenerational emotions, helping students recognize folk songs as vessels for preserving intimate, unwritten histories that transcend textbooks. Ethical Dilemma Scenarios: Students tackle thought-provoking case studies that challenge them to navigate real-world cultural and ethical questions surrounding folk music. For instance, they deliberate on prompts like "How would you ethically sample a sacred funeral dirge for a commercial music project, while honoring the community's cultural sensitivities and intellectual property rights?" fostering critical thinking and a respectful, responsible approach to cultural engagement.

Multisensory Archive Curation: Teams of student's design and build digital cultural exhibits that frame folk songs as multidimensional cultural capsules. These exhibits integrate layered elements: original song recordings, historical photographs of the communities that birthed them, olfactory samples (such as pressed sorghum leaves evoking agrarian folk tunes), and tactile replicas of traditional instruments revealing that folk songs are far more than melodies, but holistic expressions of a community's way of life.

5. Conclusion

By integrating multi-channel student feedback mechanisms, industry-education collaborative links, flexible modular course design and digital teaching technology applications, the college has built a dynamic and responsive curriculum development system. This system not only enables the Shandong folk song curriculum to take root in traditional cultural soil, but also makes it highly adaptable to the learning characteristics of modern students and the development needs of the cultural industry. It provides a solid guarantee for cultivating compound talents who can inherit traditional culture and meet the demands of the times. The Shandong folk song course builds a tradition-and-modernity integrated teaching system by centering on teaching method innovation and cultural context empowerment.

Rooted in the master-apprentice model of "oral transmission with heart-to-heart guidance", it combines traditional approaches (demonstration, notation integration, contextual immersion) with modern techniques (flipped classrooms, project-based learning, multimedia analysis, tech-enabled feedback) to enhance teaching efficacy. As the core soul of teaching,

cultural context is embedded via scenario reconstruction, ethnographic practice, critical discussions and interdisciplinary links. This equips students with both singing skills and deep cultural insights, fulfilling the goal of "transmitting skills, inheriting culture, and inspiring innovation" and nurturing culturally grounded, innovative folk song inheritors. This folk song curriculum integrates traditional musical instruments, advanced audio-visual technology and a multi-dimensional digital resource ecosystem to build a comprehensive, immersive and innovative teaching system. By combining core accompaniment instruments such as zhuiqin, Liuqin and pipa with student-friendly ones like Xun and kouxian, it not only highlights the regional characteristics of folk music but also lowers the learning threshold for beginners.

6. Discussion

The Shandong folk song curriculum utilizes a dynamic and responsive curriculum development system that integrates multi-channel student feedback, industry-education collaboration, flexible modular course design, and digital teaching technologies. This system aims to root the curriculum in traditional culture while adapting it to modern students' learning styles and the cultural industry's needs, ensuring the cultivation of well-rounded individuals capable of both preserving tradition and meeting contemporary demands. The curriculum innovation focuses on teaching method innovation and cultural context empowerment, blending traditional and modern techniques to create an integrated teaching system (Xing, 2024).

7. Suggestions

Suggestions for future research on the survey of "Shandong Folk Song Teaching at Shandong Media Vocational College." First, consider evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum through specific metrics that assess student performance, skill acquisition, and cultural understanding. Conduct longitudinal studies to track students' progress over time. Next, gather comprehensive feedback by employing various channels, including focus groups, to gain qualitative insights into student experiences. Explore how regional variations within Shandong influence folk song practices and examine the curriculum's cultural integration. Additionally, assess traditional versus modern teaching methods and their impacts on engagement, while evaluating the effectiveness of digital tools and resources.

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