

# Research on Local Music Course Management in Guangxi Colleges and Universities, China

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## Abstract

This paper starts to explore the local music curriculum of Guangxi colleges and universities, and combines field research and management research methods such as psychology and education. The study of local music curriculum management of Guangxi colleges and universities, is trying to explore the rules that local music curriculum management pattern in Guangxi is scientific, effective and intrinsic, scientifically solve various problems in its development, and provide a relatively complete theoretical basis and practical examples for other provinces in China to manage their local music curriculum.

Research results this study were the idea of "knowledge-based" under the influence of "national curriculum standards" affects the objective of local music course of Guangxi colleges and universities. On-line teaching method represented by MOOC is still in the stage of exploration in the implementation of local music course of Guangxi colleges and universities. The evaluation system of local music course of Guangxi colleges and universities is strongly subjective at present. And local music course of Guangxi colleges and universities fails to form the correct course innovation and reward mechanism.

**Keywords:** Local Music, Music course management, Guangxi Higher Education

## Introduction

In China, local cultures are diverse, and each region also has its own unique culture. In northeastern China, the Shaman Culture has deep roots, while in northern China, the Confucius and Mencius Culture prevails (Zhou, G.Y., 2014). To protect and inherit Chinese native culture and to respond to the impact of globalization. In 2000, the Ministry of Education of China issued the National Master Plan for School Arts, which pointed out that "Schools at all levels and types must attach great importance to the teaching of Chinese excellent folk art." (Mo, L., 2013).

In 2004, the Ministry of Education of China promulgated the National College Musicology (Teacher Education) Undergraduate Professional Curriculum Guidance

Program, which specifically pointed out that the music professional curriculum is composed of required courses, elective courses, as well as local and school courses. the State Council of China issued the Notice on Strengthening the Protection of Cultural Heritage in December 2005, in which a four-level protection system of "country-province-city-county" was formulated (Ju, L.Y., 2013).

Taking Guangxi Province as an example, there are 78 universities here, including 38 undergraduate colleges and universities (25 public and 13 private) and 40 academies (28 public and 12 private). Many of them have opened Guangxi local music courses. Among them, Guangxi University of Arts, Guangxi Normal University, Nanning Normal University, and so on are pioneers in the promotion of Guangxi local music culture courses (Zhong, Q., 2013). Here are some examples. Guangxi Academy of Arts opened an experimental class of "Ethnic Music Performance Major" in 2008, and its professional courses are all related to Guangxi local music. Nanning Normal University offers courses such as "Guangxi-ASEAN Musical Instrument Training", "Guangxi Minority Musical Instrument Training", "Guangxi Folk Songs Singing", and "Guangxi Folk Dance" (Zhao, Y., 2014).

Additionally, some colleges and universities offer 1-2 local music courses. For example, Baise College offers "Guangxi Zhuang Maguhu Performance" and "Guangxi Zhuang Folk Song Singing". Beibu Gulf University offers courses such as "Guangxi Eight-tone Performance". Of course, some professional colleges have not offered Guangxi local music courses yet, such as Guangxi Medical University, Guangxi University of Science and Technology, and Guangxi University of Finance and Economics (Ji, B.C., 2013).

Guangxi local music courses have achieved remarkable outcomes in more than a decade of teaching, particularly in 2015 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> National College Students Art Exhibition and Performance Activities when Guangxi won nine first prizes. Local musical performance has become a Trump Card show in Guangxi and is highly recognized and regarded by the public, which is undoubtedly attributed to the offering of local music courses in Guangxi colleges and universities. These courses enable the students to have a deep understanding of excellent local cultures in Guangxi, a true feeling of local music power and an increasing sense of identity of local musical cultures so as to lay a solid foundation for the heritage of local cultures (Han, H., & Zhao, G. H., 2015).

### Research Objectives

1. To determine if there is any statistically significant difference in satisfaction with individual courses given by teachers of local music courses in Guangxi colleges and universities in terms of teachers' gender, age, teaching years, educational background,

professional title and etc.

2. To measure to what extent and in what aspects any difference may exist.
3. To find out the deficiencies in the development, implementation, assessment. and innovation of local music courses in Guangxi colleges and universities.
4. To find out the factors that may affect local music course management in Guangxi colleges and universities.
5. To measure to what extent the teachers of local music courses in Guangxi colleges and universities are satisfied with local music courses.

## **Research Methodology**

### **An Overview of the Research Strategy**

#### **1. Preliminary Study**

Under the framework of quantitative research, a great deal of analysis is conducted on recent literature, investigation reports, government decision-making and other influential materials that were accessible. Quantitative research entails quantitative analysis to test theoretical hypotheses and research methods proposed by researchers. It has a complete set of research techniques, such as sampling, data collection, etc. This study is conducive to generating new research hypotheses and paves the way for developing a questionnaire framework.

#### **2. Questionnaire Survey**

The questionnaire follows both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Some questions require researchers to sort or assign numbers to in accordance with respective items which are part of the quantitative research; some questions behooves researchers to describe their own thoughts and opinions as part of the qualitative research. The respondents of the questionnaire include teachers who participate in the teaching of local music courses in Guangxi colleges and universities, exploring what management strategies should be pursued to meet the expectations for local music course management in Guangxi colleges and universities.

#### **3. Face-to-face Interview**

As a typical part of qualitative research, a face-to-face interview does not have a definite research plan or hypothesis in advance. The brief research plan is drafted as the research work proceeds. In qualitative research, the researchers themselves are the main “tools” for collecting descriptive data through observation, interviews and other methods (such as using audio and video equipment).

### **Research and design**

Qualitative research is carried out in natural environment for the most part, whereas quantitative research is conducted under laboratory conditions in most cases.

### **A Hybrid Research Approach**

In designing the questionnaire, it was decided that the interviewees would not only have the opportunity to directly answer the questions but also to voice complementary comments, opinions and insights. The combination of these answers and related comments provides more room for quantitative and qualitative analysis, which by definition constitutes a hybrid approach to the research.

The rationale for adopting the hybrid approach is based on the fact that both qualitative and quantitative research have their own merits and demerits. But as the two coalesce appropriately, the research is complemented with extra layers of truth to the results not necessarily attainable in any of those isolated approach.

### **Research Methods**

#### **1. About Literature Review**

After collecting and perusing the latest studies on local music courses in Guangxi colleges and universities, I have sorted out policies implemented by China's government departments at all levels as well as other relevant documents about the running of local music courses. Through literature Review, this paper classifies and summarizes relevant information on the development, implementation and reform of music courses in colleges and universities. This paper analyzes problems in every phase in course management from a meso-dimension perspective and constructs the macro framework for the main body of the subject. On the one hand, relevant experience, theoretical framework and supporting materials are cited as references. On the other hand, it is possible to discover the blind spots in research where breakthroughs could be made, contributing to a complete study on this field.

#### **2. Logical Argument**

A logical argument consists of two common processes: deduction and induction. Deduction is the process of deducing individual phenomena from general theories, whilst the process of induction mostly starts from peripheral phenomena then obtains summarized experience by applying the laws involved. This paper mainly uses induction. To begin with, the basic logic of course management is sorted out. Secondly, the causes giving rise to certain phenomena in management are dissected. In conclusion, potential solutions are proposed.

#### **3. The Questionnaire**

Zhong Qiquan, a well-known Chinese scholar, mentions in his book *Modern Curriculum Theory* (2018) that course management is implemented by teachers who are in the front line of teaching and have direct contact with their students. In this sense, the responsibilities for course management fall not only on music teachers but teaching staff in a general sense. Therefore, the majority of this questionnaire targets all

members of music major in colleges and universities, including course administrators, course developers, teachers and students who are main participants in music courses.

#### **4. Interviews**

The materials generated from the follow-up interviews contain objective and unbiased information from the interviewees' replies.

##### **1. The Interview Approach**

The approach is mainly designed to guide interviewees and help them provide reliable, effective and in-depth information for the study on local music course management in Guangxi colleges and universities. The approach is two-fold as follows:

##### **Individual Interviews**

To procure honest and reliable replies, individual interviews are held for such interviewees as course administrators, relevant workers in the Office of Academic Affairs, management staff of second-tier colleges and directors of the Teaching and Research Office.

##### **Group Interviews**

Group interviews are held for teachers. This does wonders for inspiring mutual ideas and promoting in-depth discussion of various issues. The combination of individual and group interviews is helpful for producing abundant and reliable research results, facilitating studies on the reality of local music course management in Guangxi colleges and universities.

In the preliminary research, interview outlines about course management are found in literature review. With these as references and the framework of questionnaires as the main structure, The Outline of Interviews with Research Personnel for Local Music Course Management in Guangxi Colleges and Universities is tailor-made for the participants in this study. It will also take into account the running of local music courses in Guangxi colleges and universities.

##### **2. The Arrangement of Interview Materials**

With the interviewees' permissions, the author will record their interviews. The author promises that the recordings are used exclusively for scientific purposes and under no circumstances will they ever be leaked. The interview materials are properly arranged for analysis to complement the results of the questionnaire and to fully comprehend such phases as the development, implementation and evaluation of local music courses in Guangxi colleges and universities.

#### **Analysis of Reliability and Validity of the Questionnaire**

##### **1. Reliability Verification**

Reliability analysis is an effective method to measure the stability and reliability of a comprehensive evaluation system. Thus, this paper applied SPSS22.0, a statistical

software, to analyze the data of the questionnaires. The reliability of each scale is revealed by the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients.

The academic circle generally recognizes that an evaluation system with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient higher than 0.7 has a level of stability and reliability above average; a good level when the number is between 0.7 and 0.8; an excellent level when the number is higher than 0.8; an acceptable level between 0.6 and 0.7; a poor level when the number is lower than 0.6.

As can be seen from table 4, the Cronbach' Alpha coefficient for all the scales combined (see total) is at 0.886, illustrating that the scale has a generally excellent level of stability and reliability. In addition, the course development is at 0.909, the course implementation at 0.887, the course evaluation at 0.837, the course innovation at 0.839 and course satisfaction 0.804, all of which above 0.8 (excellent). In brief, it is safe to conclude that the questionnaire is reliable.

## 2. Validity Test

Validity refers to the degree to which a certain tool can accurately measure what is to be measured. Herein, KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) and Bartlett's test are specifically used to test the validity of the scale and the results are taken as the premises for subsequent tests. The analysis results are as follows

**Table 1** KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO Value		0.761
Bartlett's Test	Chi-Square Approximation	1970.741
	F Distribution	10
	P-Value	0.0000

The questionnaire used in this research was adapted from those in related research. The adaptation takes into consideration the questions that we come across throughout our study as well as the specific traits about the research objects. The questionnaire exclusively targets teachers of local music courses in Guangxi colleges and universities about such topics as course development, implementation, evaluation, innovation and satisfaction. The Cronbach's Alpha for the entire questionnaire (0.886) also indicates the consistency of the content as well as its excellent validity. In addition, KMO and Bartlett's tests were employed to verify the those data in a more specific fashion. As is shown in table.5, the KMO value was 0.761 (between 0.7 and 0.8), and the P-value is 0.0000 (lower than 0.05), indicating that the questionnaire is valid.

## Research results

1. The idea of "knowledge-based" under the influence of "national curriculum standards" affects the objective of local music course of Guangxi colleges and universities.

In China, the course objective is set within the scope of "national curriculum standards". Curriculum goals are to inherit the school's educational goals, professional training goals, and to follow specific teaching goals. It is an important hub for the construction of the entire curriculum system.

The curriculum goal under China's "National Curriculum Standards" is a three-level curriculum system, namely basic courses, professional courses, and professional basic courses. The goal of the curriculum system can be directly traced back to the 1950s of education history when China imitated the former Soviet Union. It can be said that such curriculum goals and curriculum systems were adapted to the era of the planned economy at that time.

The existing local music course goals of Guangxi colleges and universities are influenced by "national curriculum standards", which stipulates that the talent training goal is to serve socialist construction. Meeting the needs of social development is the main value demand of China's curriculum goals. Under the influence of the national will, the local music course goals and talent training goals of Guangxi colleges and universities were finalized at the high-level decision-making.

The researcher believes that national will and government preferences exist in any country, and many countries in the world regard education as an extension of their government will. However, this has led to a single and locked-in path of course goals and talent training goals.

Secondly, the goal of talent training has a strong social-service orientation. Under the background of the original era, education serves social development. With the development of society and the times, the three-level curriculum system has gradually been less compatible with the current social system in China, and the contradictions are becoming increasingly prominent.

In the training of talents among colleges and universities in China, all the course objectives just emphasize "discipline-centered" and "knowledge-centered". As a result of it, the design of course goals is mainly "knowledge-based" rather than "ability-based". It is necessary to update the traditional course goals which are "discipline-centered" and "knowledge-centered".

For the curriculum management of colleges and universities, the original curriculum objectives have changed from the original "knowledge-based" to the "ability-based" emphasized by modern society. What has changed is not just the referential

content of the text such as "curriculum objectives", but also the change of the entire curriculum system.

## **2. The on-line teaching method represented by MOOC is still in the stage of exploration in the implementation of local music course of Guangxi colleges and universities.**

In 2015, the Ministry of Education of China introduced the Opinions on Strengthening the Application and Management of On-line Open Course Construction of Institutions of Higher Education, pointing out the direction of extension and development of on-line open courses, e.g., MOOC, in colleges and universities. The government-led direction has fully shown the important status of MOOC in the reform of teaching method of Chinese higher education in the future. However, MOOC fails to give play to the huge social value and pedagogical meaning behind.

Researchers believe that when it comes to MOOC, China is still at the stage of exploring. The corresponding value chain of the MOOC has not yet formed a complete set. Whether the nature of the MOOC is a commodity or a public product has yet to be determined. The construction of MOOC in Guangxi Province is in its infancy due to economic restrictions.

In addition to the bottleneck in the development of MOOC, compared with the MOOC platform that has become part of the mainstream learning platform among developed countries in Europe and America, China still has some problems in the construction of the MOOC platform. According to incomplete statistics, there are 9 MOOC platforms built and operated in China. However, the teaching interaction models provided by these platforms have comparatively limited functions and a single method. Besides, their ability to analyze massive learning data is weak, and the stability of the platforms is also poor. MOOC platform is a kind of platform that requires the integration of information resources, and course contents between different platforms need to be mutually supplemented and confirmed to meet the actual development needs of students' learning. In contrast, most of China's MOOC platforms have separate systems, and their operating interfaces and functions are also different. Governmental platform and standard construction are necessary for the long-term development of on-line teaching methods represented by MOOC.

## **3. The evaluation system of local music course of Guangxi colleges and universities is strongly subjective at present.**

As for course assessment, it is divided into two categories: formative assessment, which emphasizes process, and summative assessment, which emphasizes results. In China, the main subjects of formative assessment are teachers and other teaching professionals, while the main subjects of summative assessment are educational experts



and government-appointed non-teaching personnel. The evaluation system of the course goes from top to bottom, with the government being the highest level of evaluation, followed by schools evaluating teachers, teachers evaluating students, and students evaluating teachers.

When the government conducts course evaluation, the subject of course evaluation is the government itself. The government achieves the purpose of controlling the evaluated object through the form of course evaluation and reduces the transaction cost between the government and the controlled school in an institutional form. However, after graduation, students face a highly competitive market, where the market only selects students according to their own needs. Therefore, the market is not only in selecting students but also in selecting schools. Universities that constantly follow the government's evaluation can never have independent innovation; and universities that lose the source of independent innovation can only get the result of being eliminated by the market.

Whether it is formative or summative evaluation, the main body of evaluation should be the front-line teachers, and only then should the opinions of different subjects at different levels, such as government officials, curriculum experts, parents, and student representatives, be taken into account. Based on the opinions of all, the democratic form of course evaluation should be verified, discussed, negotiated, and communicated to give full play to the role of all subjects in course evaluation and meet the needs of all stages of course implementation.

In such a pluralistic group of assessment subjects, special emphasis must be placed on the primary role of assessment by teachers. Teachers are the front-line workers in the implementation of the entire curriculum. They also have the most practical experience of the shortcomings and improvements in the actual delivery of lessons and are therefore deservedly central. Other subjects are assisted by the interests of different levels of government, experts, parents, and students; their preference for curriculum evaluation is usually for self-serving facts and improvements.

Western course evaluation, third-party evaluation mechanism is an important initiative, the significance of which lies in avoiding the government "both as a referee and as an athlete" situation. The government unilaterally monopolizes the supply side of the course evaluation, there is no completely competitive market to speak of. In such a game, the government is in a strong position, the ideal balance of interests between the main course evaluation is very difficult to achieve.

Secondly, course teaching is the most microscopic aspect of university education, with majors being composed of different courses and disciplines being based on majors. The nature and content of different disciplines are different, and naturally,

no generalization can be made when evaluating the quality of course teaching. The evaluation of the course should take into account elements such as differences in teachers, in course specializations, and in students. Different disciplines need to be taught differently, so the focus of evaluation may vary. However, on the contrary, the teaching evaluation system of Chinese university courses is not divided by different disciplines, but by objectives. Regardless of the discipline, the criteria for consideration are based on several fixed dimensions such as teaching objectives, teaching content, teaching methods, teaching methods, and teaching effectiveness. Such a simple goal-based course evaluation model is easy to operate for educational management, but it neglects the fundamental of course evaluation: student-centered method. The student-centered method determines that different students have different courses, majors, and disciplines, and different nature of courses will give rise to different teaching styles and teacher personalities. This determines that, if the object of a course evaluation cannot be varied from person to person, at least it should be done "according to local conditions", or else a one-size-fits-all evaluation will only affect the credibility of the final evaluation of the course and the actual effect.

At the same time, in the general course evaluation process, relative standards tend to prevail. China is a vast country, and the level of economic development varies from province to province, and the level of education in many regions is not comparable. The use of relative standard evaluation does have many advantages, such as its incentive effect which sets a benchmark for backward regions. However, this kind of evaluation tends to deepen the internal contradictions of those being evaluated: the situation varies greatly from region to region and from school to school, and even within the same region there may be a large degree of variation. There are two main reasons for this part of the difference: they are not on the same starting line as each other, and the policy preference is acquired. This is also a side effect of the problem of the limitations of relative standards evaluation, so it is not appropriate to use relative standards for evaluation often. For different situations, different periods, different objects, the reasonable use of relative standards, absolute standards, and self-standards for evaluation, is the biggest problem facing China's university course evaluation system.

#### **4. Local music course of Guangxi colleges and universities fails to form the correct course innovation and reward mechanism.**

American scholar Derek Bok believed that "competition is the driving factor and essential feature of the development of American universities. Without corresponding competition, teachers, as knowledge holders, are hardly motivated to devote themselves to curriculum innovation and scientific research transformation. Development of corresponding effective curriculum Incentive mechanism is imperative."

In China, the innovation of courses by teachers is mostly task-oriented. On the one hand, the evaluation of teachers' professional titles pays more attention to scientific research indicators, that is, the number of research projects that teachers have undertaken and papers they have published. For the innovation of a course, teachers need to spend a lot of effort. However, after the course is innovation, it will not bring any effective stimulation to teachers except increasing the workload and assessment pressure of them, resulting in teachers' low enthusiasm for course innovation.

On the other hand, teachers are direct participants in course development. The professional ability of front-line teachers directly affects the quantity and quality of course innovation. Based on interviews, the author learned that Guangxi local music course is currently in the early stage of development. Instructors of this course have published relevant academic papers for professional title evaluation or scientific research tasks. However, due to the relatively low quality of their papers, they are basically published in ordinary provincial journals such as *The Voice of the Yellow River*, *Northern Music*, and *Sea of Song*. There are very few academic papers that can be published in CSSCI, let alone SCI. It can be seen that teachers' professional ability is also one of the unfavorable factors affecting curriculum innovation.

### **5. Suggestions to improve local music course of Guangxi colleges and universities**

The suggestions mainly include the following aspects: Forming the "ability-based" course objective system, and avoiding single and locked formation path. Actively exploring new teaching methods, and strengthening the standard construction of on-line open courses. Changing the single course evaluation pattern, and implementing the diversified and objective course evaluation standards. Establishing a complete and scientific course innovation and reward mechanism, and encouraging teachers to actively develop new local music courses of Guangxi.

Improving teachers' basic qualities, and encouraging them to go abroad for further study to improve their education background and title. Adding the mechanism of credit transfer during course implementation

### **Research contribution**

With the research object of characteristic local music course of Guangxi colleges and universities, this paper discusses the construction and the inherent laws of Guangxi local music course management pattern based on data analysis, comprehensive survey, interview and practice, providing distinct theoretical and practical significance.

The research contribution of this paper is mainly reflected in the following aspects:

Firstly, this paper comprehensively and deeply gathers the research data related to local music course management of Guangxi colleges and universities, applies statistics, management and other research methods to grasp the first-hand data of local music course construction of Guangxi colleges and universities, providing a detailed database for the research on the current situation and the management pattern of local music course construction of Guangxi colleges and universities.

Secondly, with the research methods which are both qualitative and quantitative, this paper conducts a statistical analysis of various variables during the research of local music course management of Guangxi colleges and universities, providing new research methods for the construction of local music course management pattern of Guangxi colleges and universities.

Thirdly, this paper provides a new understanding for the concept and theory of local music course management at present, and provides a theoretical support for the development and innovation of local music course of Chinese colleges and universities.

At last, with literature research method, interview method and the method of comparative research, this paper combs and analyzes the operation and management of local music course of Guangxi colleges and universities, and explores the inherent laws and effective pattern of local music course operation and management. It is devoted to establish a scientific course management system, enriches and completes the operation and management pattern of local music course of colleges and universities, and promotes the improvement and development of the overall level of local music course of China.

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