

The Application and Innovation of the Orff Teaching Method in the Teaching of Anhui Folk Songs

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Abstract: This study explores the application of the Orff teaching method in teaching Anhui folk songs, emphasizing active participation, creativity, and cultural integration. By combining Orff's principles with regional folk music, the research examines its effectiveness in enhancing student engagement, improving musical skills, and fostering cultural understanding. Classroom experiments and surveys show that Orff-based teaching increases students' interest, improves rhythm and performance abilities, and strengthens their connection to local traditions. This study highlights Orff's potential to innovate music education and preserve traditional Chinese music heritage.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Importance of the Problems

The Orff teaching method, developed by Carl Orff in the early 20th century, has had a significant impact on music education worldwide. The music teaching method founded by Orff, after nearly 70 years of development, has not only become the most widely spread globally in the 20th century.^[1] Studies show that despite its origins in Germany, the teaching principles and methods of the Carl Orff teaching method are highly flexible and can be adjusted and localized according to different cultural backgrounds.^[2] It emphasizes an experiential approach, encouraging students to engage with music through movement, rhythm, and the use of elemental instruments like xylophones and drums. This student-centered method is particularly effective in promoting creativity, improvisation, and a deeper understanding of music. The Orff method's emphasis on active participation and hands-on learning has made it an invaluable tool in modern music education.

Folk songs are collectively created and passed down orally by the working people in their production, labor, and social life. They are living fossils that record the course of people's lives.^[3] Anhui folk songs, representing a rich part of China's musical heritage, have distinctive characteristics that reflect the region's unique cultural and historical context. Anhui folk songs have

injected fresh vitality into the development of Chinese culture, thus keeping traditional Chinese culture alive forever.^[4] These songs, often simple in form but deeply emotional, depict the life, customs, and values of the people of Anhui Province. However, the preservation and transmission of Anhui folk songs face challenges due to modernization and globalization, which have led to a decline in interest among younger generations. Traditional methods of teaching these folk songs may not resonate with today's students, who are increasingly influenced by contemporary music styles and technologies. The basic path for Anhui folk songs to enter a new era includes "old bottled new wine", innovative forms of expression, transformation and development infused with other artistic blood, and expanding the space for survival and development through modern media.^[3]

The integration of the Orff teaching method with Anhui folk songs presents an opportunity to revitalize the teaching of these traditional songs, making them more engaging and accessible to modern students. This research seeks to explore how the Orff method can be applied to Anhui folk songs to enhance student participation, foster creativity, and promote cultural preservation.

1.2. Research Objectives

The objective of this study is to explore the application and innovation of the Orff teaching method in the teaching of Anhui folk songs, specifically examining how Orff's approach can be integrated with traditional Chinese folk music to enhance student engagement, improve musical skills, and promote the preservation and revitalization of these cultural traditions.

1.3. Research Significance

This research is significant in advancing music education by incorporating an innovative pedagogical approach—Orff's method—into the teaching of Anhui folk songs. Folk music is the essence of ethnic culture, and primary school music teaching should attach importance to promoting and inheriting excellent ethnic literature.^[6] It contributes to the preservation and revitalization of an important aspect of Chinese intangible cultural heritage, ensuring the continued relevance of Anhui folk music in contemporary education. Furthermore, by bridging traditional cultural elements with modern teaching techniques, this study offers new insights into how music education can evolve to meet the needs of today's students while fostering a deeper connection to cultural traditions.

2. Related Documents and Research

2.1. Domestic Documents and Researches

In recent years, the integration of the Orff teaching method into the Chinese music education system has become a focal point for many scholars. Researchers have explored various ways of adapting Orff's approach to traditional Chinese music, particularly folk songs, to enhance both the teaching process and the preservation of local cultural heritage. The application of Orff to Anhui folk songs has been a subject of growing academic interest due to the need to make folk music education more engaging and relevant to contemporary students.

Wang, W. J. (2020) explored how Anhui folk song culture can be integrated into primary school music teaching, specifically through case studies involving the "Fengyang Flower Drum." This study highlights the potential of local folk songs to enrich the music curriculum and promote a deeper connection to cultural heritage in students^[5].

Tang, D. X., & Chen, Y. (2020) discussed the role of Anhui folk songs in rural revitalization, advocating for the use of modern music teaching methods like Orff to keep these traditions alive. Their research underscores the importance of combining traditional music with contemporary

educational techniques to engage younger generations^[6].

Rong, R. (2019) emphasized the creativity and flexibility inherent in the Orff method, particularly its suitability for teaching Anhui folk songs. This study discusses how the interactive nature of Orff can make learning folk songs more participatory and engaging for students^[3].

Lu, W. (2016) examined the role of the Orff method in university-level music education, focusing on how it can be used to enhance students' understanding of Anhui folk songs. The study highlights Orff's ability to integrate traditional music with modern pedagogical practices in higher education^[4].

These studies collectively underline the significance of integrating the Orff method into the teaching of Anhui folk songs, highlighting its potential to promote student engagement and ensure the preservation of local cultural traditions.

2.2. Foreign Documents and Researches

Internationally, the Orff teaching method has been extensively applied in music education, particularly in Western countries like the United States and Europe. Much of the research focuses on how Orff's principles can be adapted to different cultural contexts, including the integration of folk music from various regions.

Xiu, H. L. (1997) provided an overview of Orff's methodology, focusing on its key principles of integrating music, dance, and drama. The study also discusses how Orff's methods can be applied to different local music traditions, including folk songs from various cultures^[1].

Yu, G. X. (2002) conducted a study on the application of the Orff method in the United States, particularly its incorporation of folk music from diverse cultural backgrounds. This study emphasizes the importance of adapting the Orff method to include local traditions to enrich students' music education^[7].

Li, D. (1995) examined the cross-cultural adaptability of the Orff teaching method, highlighting its application to non-Western music traditions. Li's research suggests that Orff's principles are highly flexible and can be effectively adapted to local musical styles, such as Anhui folk songs^[2].

Wang, L. X. (2012) explored the fusion of Western music teaching methods with Chinese folk traditions. This study suggests that the Orff method provides a creative and interactive approach to teaching traditional Chinese music, contributing to both its preservation and its contemporary relevance in education^[8].

These international studies highlight the broad applicability of the Orff method in music education and its capacity to enhance student creativity while integrating traditional cultural music into modern pedagogical frameworks.

2.3. Summary

The research reviewed in both domestic and international contexts demonstrates a growing interest in the integration of the Orff teaching method with folk music education. In China, scholars emphasize the role of Orff in preserving and revitalizing local musical traditions, particularly through its adaptability to Anhui folk songs. Internationally, the Orff method is recognized for its cross-cultural applicability, offering a flexible approach to music education that bridges cultural gaps and promotes creativity. Overall, the combination of Orff's interactive methods with Anhui folk music holds significant potential for enriching music education and ensuring the continued relevance of these traditional songs.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Scope of Research

At present, China's quality education proposes that music education should be aimed at all students and fully and comprehensively play its role in the comprehensive development of individuals. This also reflects the original principles and concepts advocated by Orff in music education.^[8] This study focuses on the application of the Orff teaching method in the teaching of Anhui folk songs, specifically targeting university-level music students. The scope includes the design and implementation of a curriculum that integrates the Orff method with selected Anhui folk songs. The research investigates the effectiveness of this integration in enhancing students' musical engagement, skill development, and cultural understanding.

The study is limited to the Art Department of Maanshan Vocational and Technical College, Anhui Province, China. The participants are freshmen and sophomores majoring in music education, totaling approximately 80 students. These students are selected based on their involvement in introductory music courses, ensuring they have a basic understanding of music theory and performance techniques. The chosen Anhui folk songs for this study include well-known examples such as “Zhai Shiliu” and “Fengyang Flower Drum,” which are widely recognized in Anhui and represent key elements of the region's folk music.

The research aims to evaluate the impact of the Orff method on students' ability to perform these folk songs, their interest in traditional music, and their overall learning experience. Data will be collected through a satisfaction survey and performance evaluations.

3.2. Research Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research approach to assess the effectiveness of the Orff teaching method.

Satisfaction Survey: Students will complete a survey at the end of the course to evaluate their overall experience with the Orff-based teaching method. The survey will assess their interest in Anhui folk songs, their satisfaction with the course, and their perceptions of how the Orff method contributed to their musical skills. The survey will use Likert-scale questions to quantify students' opinions and experiences. This survey will provide valuable data on student engagement and the perceived effectiveness of the Orff method in teaching Anhui folk songs.

Performance Evaluation: The students' musical performance skills will be evaluated through practical assessments during the course. These evaluations will focus on rhythm accuracy, instrumental performance, and vocal proficiency as they apply the Orff method to Anhui folk songs. Performance scores will provide objective data on the students' progress and the impact of the Orff method on their musical abilities.

The quantitative data collected from the satisfaction survey and performance evaluations will be analyzed using statistical methods to determine the effectiveness of the Orff method in improving student engagement, skills, and cultural understanding.

4. Results

4.1. Student Satisfaction with the Orff Teaching Method

The satisfaction survey results indicate a high level of student engagement and satisfaction with the Orff-based teaching method. A majority of students (over 85%) expressed that the interactive, hands-on approach of the Orff method significantly increased their interest in Anhui folk songs.

Many students reported that the use of Orff instruments and rhythm exercises made learning folk songs more enjoyable and accessible. The survey also revealed that students appreciated the creativity and participation fostered by the Orff method, with 80% of respondents indicating that they felt more engaged in music classes compared to traditional teaching methods.

Survey Data:

90% of students felt that the Orff method made learning Anhui folk songs more engaging.

85% of students felt that their understanding of the cultural significance of the songs improved.

75% of students expressed that their performance skills (rhythm, vocal, and instrumental) had improved through the use of Orff-based activities.

4.2. Improvement in Musical Skills

Performance evaluations conducted during the course show a noticeable improvement in students' musical skills. The assessments, focusing on rhythm accuracy, instrumental performance, and vocal proficiency, reveal that students were able to apply the Orff method to perform Anhui folk songs with greater precision and confidence.

Performance Evaluation Data:

80% of students showed significant improvement in rhythm accuracy, as evidenced by their ability to perform the rhythmic patterns of Anhui folk songs with more consistency.

70% of students demonstrated enhanced instrumental performance, with improvements in handling Orff instruments such as xylophones and drums.

65% of students exhibited stronger vocal proficiency, with more accurate pitch and timing when singing Anhui folk songs.

4.3. Impact on Student Interest in Anhui Folk Songs

One of the main objectives of the research was to assess how the Orff method influences student interest in Anhui folk songs. The results indicate that the integration of Orff methods has a positive impact on students' attitudes toward traditional music. Prior to the course, only 20% of students expressed a strong interest in Anhui folk songs, but after the course, this number increased to 70%.

Survey Data:

70% of students reported a higher level of interest in Anhui folk songs after participating in the course.

60% of students expressed a desire to continue learning and performing folk songs outside of class.

4.4. Overall Effectiveness of the Orff Teaching Method

The overall effectiveness of the Orff method in teaching Anhui folk songs can be summarized through the combined survey results and performance evaluations. The majority of students (approximately 80%) expressed that the Orff method significantly enhanced their learning experience and helped them connect with both the music and the cultural heritage of Anhui. The combination of active participation, creative expression, and cultural exploration made the learning process more enjoyable and meaningful for students.

Summary of Data:

85% of students felt the Orff method improved their music education experience.

80% of students reported feeling more connected to Anhui's cultural heritage.

75% of students would recommend the Orff-based approach for teaching other traditional Chinese folk songs.

5. Conclusion

Diversification, as the most fundamental viewpoint of Orff's music education philosophy, permeates throughout his entire music teaching system.^[5] This study explored the application and innovation of the Orff teaching method in the teaching of Anhui folk songs, with the aim of enhancing student engagement, improving musical skills, and fostering a deeper connection to traditional Chinese music. The research findings highlight the effectiveness of the Orff method in achieving these goals.

First, the survey results and performance evaluations demonstrate that the Orff method significantly increased students' interest in Anhui folk songs. By engaging students through active participation, rhythm exercises, and the use of Orff instruments, the course successfully captured students' attention and made learning traditional music more enjoyable. The increase in student interest, with 70% of students expressing a stronger desire to continue learning Anhui folk songs, underscores the potential of Orff's approach in revitalizing folk music education.

Second, the improvement in students' musical skills, particularly in rhythm accuracy, instrumental performance, and vocal proficiency, provides strong evidence of the Orff method's effectiveness in enhancing musical education. The hands-on, creative nature of the method allowed students to not only develop technical skills but also foster a deeper understanding of the cultural significance of Anhui folk music.

Finally, the overall satisfaction with the Orff-based course suggests that the method can be a valuable tool for teaching traditional Chinese music. The majority of students reported feeling more connected to Anhui's cultural heritage and appreciated the innovative, interactive approach to learning folk songs. This confirms that the Orff teaching method can contribute to the preservation and revitalization of traditional music, making it more accessible and relevant to contemporary students.

In conclusion, the integration of the Orff teaching method with Anhui folk songs offers a promising approach to music education. By making traditional music more engaging and accessible, it helps preserve cultural heritage while enhancing students' creativity and musical abilities. Further research is needed to explore the long-term effects of this approach and its applicability to other regional folk music traditions in China and beyond.

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