

INTEGRATING CHINESE ETHNIC AND FOLK ART INTO THE COLOUR COMPOSITION COURSE TO IMPROVE THE EFFECT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Abstract

Colour Composition is a basic professional course for every artistic design major. Nevertheless, the effect of traditional teaching and learning could be improved. Students believed that the course was optional to their studies. Furthermore, the content and teaching methods could have gained students' attention and interest and fostered innovation. This study proposed integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course to address challenges and gaps in research. This study employed a quantitative research method to determine the effect of teaching and learning on student learning after integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into its Colour Composition course. This study presents a reference for Colour Composition courses and a guideline for other Artistic Design courses.

Keywords: Chinese ethnic and folk, Colour composition course, Teaching content, Teaching methods.

1. Introduction

The Colour Composition course is essential for artistic design students in China [1-3], as it lays the foundation for subsequent courses [1-3]. However, there are challenges with the course. The teaching content and methods lack connection with succeeding courses, diminishing student enthusiasm and attitude towards the course and art career [4]. Traditional teaching methods, which emphasise imparting and practising, confuse students and lessen their interest in learning [5]. Practicing emphasising copying and associative design also hinders students' innovative skills and interest in learning [6]. Thus, the study explored the answer to three questions; i) how to connect the basic and core professional courses to increase the significance of studying the basic course, ii) how to increase student's interest towards the course, and iii) how to develop students' innovative skills. All three research questions are essential to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

Previous studies on colour composition courses have left some research gaps. Firstly, they did not investigate if new teaching methods positively impact students' learning levels. Secondly, the proposed improvements to teaching content and methods lack details that can stimulate students' interest in learning and improve their understanding. Thirdly, prior research suggested incorporating Chinese folk art into the course, but it has not been comprehensively connected to colour composition teaching. This can lead to a lack of understanding and connection. Overall, there is a need for more research that investigates the effectiveness of new teaching methods, provides detailed teaching content, and comprehensively incorporates Chinese folk art to enhance students' learning outcomes in colour composition courses.

Furthermore, there is no suggestion on how to incorporate it, nor is there a measure to determine if it improves teaching effectiveness. Based on problems and gaps in research, the study suggests incorporating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course. The study aimed to accomplish the following objectives:

- To suggest methods for teaching the content and integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course.
- To analyse the effect of teaching and learning after integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course.

This study suggested methods for teaching Colour Composition courses and addressing the research gaps. Upon integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course, the teaching effect and students' learning achievements (levels) were assessed. This study's findings can assist in improving the instruction method and student learning of the Colour Composition courses and raise awareness of Chinese ethnic and folk art among instructors, researchers, and students.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Develop the connection between a basic and core professional courses

Chinese ethnic and folk art has a unique style and is an essential part of Chinese national culture [7-9]. It has been used in interior design and animation design in China, influencing the global animation market [10-12]. Therefore, art and design students in China need to learn about traditional culture, customs, and artistic aesthetics, as well as Chinese ethnic and folk philosophy, to incorporate them into

their designs. Using Chinese ethnic and folk art as educational resources in all artistic design courses can provide diverse themes and learning resources and strengthen the association between basic and core professional courses [12]. This approach can also help students comprehensively understand traditional culture while addressing teaching content and methods.

2.2. Creates interest and nurtures innovative abilities

Chinese ethnic and folk art has a rich history and has deeply penetrated every Chinese heart [13]. It includes diverse resources, such as New Year pictures, papercut, clay sculpture, embroidery, brocade, kites, facial makeup, and shadow play [10-13]. Integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course can help stimulate students' interest and provide more creative inspiration sources [4]. The characteristics of national culture influence the development of artistic design education, promoting the inheritance and development of Chinese ethnic folk art [8]. Chinese ethnic and folk art contains profound national and spiritual culture, fulfilling people's aesthetic and psychological needs [8]. Integrating it into the Colour Composition course can enhance students' understanding of Chinese ethnic and folk art and culture while nurturing their skills in colour observation, expression, and creation, which are the course's objectives [14].

Besides, communicating cultural information is one of the purposes of colour composition, focusing on the colour's symbolic meaning or emotional connotation [15], which is consistent with the characteristics and connotations of Chinese ethnic and folk art. Chinese ethnic and folk art was used to convey people's thoughts and emotions through its symbolic meanings, and its colours also convey certain information [7]. Integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course could be an innovative and essential teaching resource for improving expressing information and aesthetic standards, increasing sources of innovative inspiration, and correctly communicating cultural information.

3. Proposed Approaches

Based on the research problems and gaps, this study proposed integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course from the aspects of teaching content and methods. It aimed to establish the teaching content and methods of the Chinese Colour Composition course (as shown in Fig. 1).

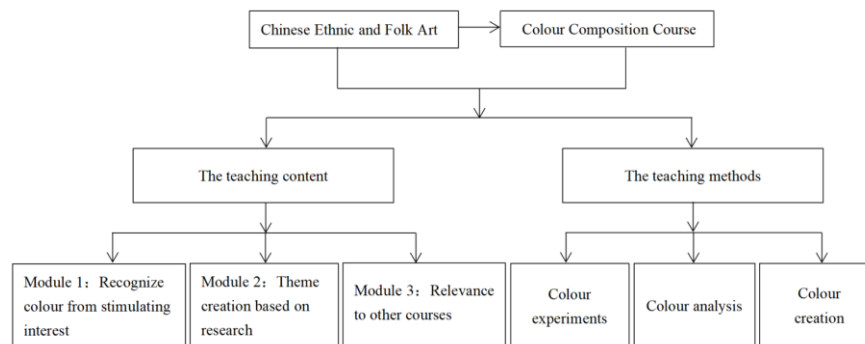


Fig. 1. Proposed approaches for integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the colour composition course.

3.1. The teaching content

Focused on addressing the teaching content of the Chinese Colour Composition course, the authors designed three modules to integrate Chinese ethnic and folk art into the course (as shown in Fig. 2).

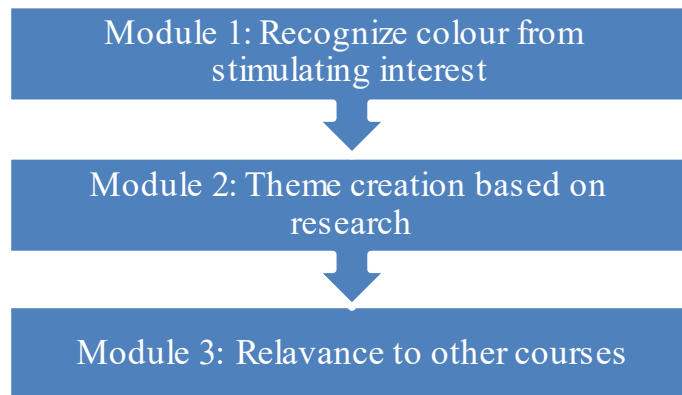


Fig. 2. The module of teaching content.

3.1.1. Module 1: Recognize colour from stimulating interest

Integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course can improve students' cognition and interest in colour [7]. This approach provides a subjective and active understanding of colour and helps students comprehend the basic theoretical knowledge of colour. Teaching colour theory explicitly can be boring and decrease students' interest and initiative [5]. However, the rich colour expressions of Chinese ethnic and folk art stimulate students' curiosity and emotions, making gaining acceptance and understanding easier [11]. Through narratives and theoretical knowledge, students can learn to appreciate the culture and history behind ethnic and folk art while also gaining a better understanding of colour theory. Overall, incorporating ethnic and folk art into the curriculum effectively encourages students' interest in colour cognition and preserves China's rich cultural heritage.

3.1.2. Module 2: Theme creation based on research

Teaching methods that transfer theoretical knowledge and replicate practices can limit students' creativity and innovation. However, by exploring ethnic and folk art, analysing colours, and developing themes, students can enhance their learning content and develop innovative skills. Through researching and analysing Chinese ethnic and folk art, students can appreciate its rich cultural heritage, enhance their artistic ability, and generate new ideas. After creating their artwork, students present their work and write a report discussing their research, creation process, and perception of ethnic and folk art. This approach keeps students interested in the course, improves national cultural awareness, and fosters innovative skills. The fascination and beauty of ethnic and folk art can inspire students to learn, explore and generate new ideas.

3.1.3. Module 3: Relevance to other courses

The Colour Composition course and the content of other courses are interconnected. The goal is to break away from the traditional method of teaching colour composition and focus on the course so that students can learn to use colour while understanding it. For example, as far as the major of Environmental Art Design is concerned, interior and outdoor design must consider cultural characteristics. Therefore, it is necessary to link the teaching content of the colour composition course with the 3Dmax indoor drawing course and guide students on applying ethnic and folk art and its colour to generate indoor drawings. Through the coherence between courses, students can be guided to recognise and use colours, understand the connection between the colour composition course and other courses, and reinforce the necessity of students to learn this course.

3.2. The teaching methods

The Colour Composition course uses colour experiments, analysis, and creation as the teaching methods [16]. This study suggested incorporating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the course teaching, which addresses the issues with traditional teaching models and creates coherence between the course content and delivery method.

3.2.1. Colour experiments

The Colour Composition course aims to develop students' ability to recognise, perceive, analyse, and summarise colours and their relationships through colour experiments [16]. Integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art as a teaching resource improves the adequacy of resources and enables students to recognise, perceive, analyse, and summarise colour and the relationship between colours, resulting in enhanced colour cognitive ability. The course offers a teacher-led and student-led version of the colour experiment, with the teacher-led version guiding students in conducting the experiment and the student-led version allowing them to choose ethnic and folk art to conduct the experiment based on their interests. After the experiment, students prepare a report on the results and discuss their colour cognition, perception, analysis, and summary. This approach effectively improves the course's learning outcome and enhances students' innovative skills.

3.2.2. Colour analysis

In the Colour Composition course, students develop their ability to analyse and use colours for professional design. They first need to learn to recognise and analyse colours to understand their relationships, combination rules, and application methods. Integrating ethnic and folk art into the colour analysis teaching method enhances the richness of resources and improves the learning outcome of the course. By exploring and organising colours, students can develop their colour cognitive abilities and create aesthetic colour schemes that guide future creations [16]. The colour analysis teaching method emphasises exploring the relationship and combination rules between colours and allows students to ensure that their creations comply with aesthetic standards. Therefore, using the colour analysis teaching method with ethnic and folk art is critical for developing students' colour analysis abilities and guiding their future creations.

3.2.3. Colour Creation

To prepare for their future careers, students need creative experience and understanding. The teaching method of colour creation, which aims to enable students to acquire the ability of colour creation, is essential during colour composition. By integrating ethnic and folk art, students can build and apply their design colour system to their colour creation. Through previous colour experiments and analysis, students develop the better colour cognitive ability and analysis skills. Colour creation can be categorised into thematic and non-thematic creation. Thematic creation can guide students who lack creative experience and help them gain it. Non-thematic creation can unlock their creative potential and develop their ability to distinguish colour themes.

4. Research Method

This study surveyed five Chinese lecturers from three majors using a quantitative research method with a survey questionnaire. Two lecturers from Nanchang University have over ten years of experience teaching Interior Hand-drawn Design courses. The other three are from Jiangxi Water Resources Institute, with experience teaching Colour Composition, Animation Character Design, and Advertising Graphics Creation courses. All the lecturers use Chinese ethnic and folk art as resources in their teaching, and students are required to incorporate traditional culture and colours in their assignments and artworks. The study aimed to collect data on the use of Chinese ethnic and folk art in design education and its impact on students' learning outcomes.

Additionally, the study employed quantitative research using a questionnaire to survey 90 students from two Environmental Artistic Design major classes of Jiangxi Water Resources Institute in Nanchang City, Jiangxi province, a public higher education institute. These students have completed the Colour Composition course. Chinese ethnic and folk art was integrated into the Colour Composition course content and teaching methods. Additionally, these students have used Chinese ethnic and folk art as resources and inspirations in their assignments while completing the Colour Composition course. The five Chinese lecturers were selected as they have experience integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into their courses and the effect the teaching has on the student learning outcome. Second, the courses taught by the lecturer are professional artistic design courses that require using colours in the assignments and artworks. Hence the five lecturers know the importance of integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art in the courses.

Additionally, they can assess the student's ability to use colours through their assignments and artworks. The student sample was chosen because they had completed the Colour Composition course incorporating Chinese ethnic and folk art and two other professional courses taught by the first author. Hence, the author recognises the effect of the teaching and learning intervention on the students.

The survey questionnaire for this study was adapted from prior research [1, 17]. Students and lecturers answered the questions using a 5-point Likert scale. In October 2022, data on the perspectives of students was collected. The perspective data of lecturers was collected in December 2022. Physical questionnaires were distributed to collect data to ensure the student survey's

validity. The lecturer's survey questionnaire was completed through a telephone survey. All the distributed questionnaires were completed and returned. The following Tables 1 to 5 show the findings of the perspectives of Chinese lecturers and students.

Table 1. Importance of Chinese ethnic and folk art as teaching resources.

Scale	Number of lecturers	Proportion
Extremely important	4	80%
Important	1	20%
Moderately important	0	0%
Somewhat important	0	0%
Not important	0	0%

Table 2. Agreement with integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course.

Scale	Number of lecturers	Proportion
Strongly agree	5	100%
Agree	0	0%
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%

Table 3. Interest in Chinese ethnic and folk art.

Scale	Number of students	Proportion
Extremely interested	35	39%
Interested	36	40%
Moderately interested	12	13%
Somewhat interested	2	2%
Not interested	5	6%

Table 4. Familiarity with Chinese ethnic and folk art.

Scale	Number of students	Proportion
Extremely familiar	16	18%
Familiar	40	44%
Moderately familiar	20	22%
Somewhat familiar	10	11%
Not familiar	4	5%

Table 5. Satisfaction level after integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course.

Scale	Number of students	Proportion
Extremely satisfied	20	18%
Satisfied	55	44%
Moderately satisfied	8	22%
Somewhat satisfied	3	11%
Not satisfied	4	5%

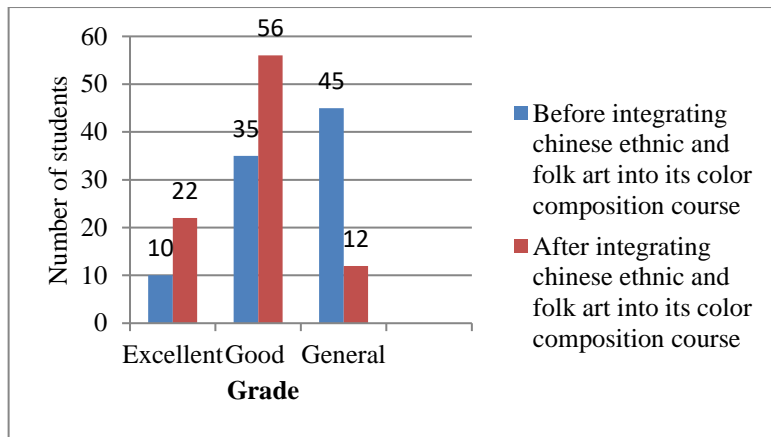


Fig. 3. Students' learning level of the Colour Composition course in the two classes.

5. Results and Discussion

The study attempted to determine the effect of teaching and learning after integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course from the perspectives of lecturers and students. Findings indicated that integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course positively affected the students and improved their learning.

Table 1 shows the importance of employing Chinese ethnic and folk art as teaching resources from the lecturers' perspectives. Findings revealed that the five lecturers highly supported employing Chinese ethnic and folk art as teaching resources. Among them, 4 Chinese lecturers (80%) stated that it was extremely important, and 1 (20%) claimed it is essential to employ Chinese ethnic and folk art as teaching resources. All five lecturers (100%) strongly agreed with integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course (as shown in Table 2). The perspective of the lecturers conquered with findings of previous studies, which reported that artistic design courses should employ Chinese ethnic and folk art as educational resources, which is essential to the Artistic Design majors. Additionally, the results indicated that integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course has positive effects.

The study found that most students were interested in Chinese ethnic and folk art. Among the respondents, 39% were extremely interested, 40% were interested, and only 6% were not. The students were also found to be familiar with Chinese ethnic and folk art, with 44% being familiar, 18% being extremely familiar, 22% were moderately familiar, 11% were somewhat familiar, and only 5% not familiar with Chinese ethnic and folk art. Therefore, integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course can spark student interest and promote positive learning outcomes. This can enhance the teaching effect and students' learning level.

A study was conducted to evaluate the impact of integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course, and the results were positive. Of the total number of students, 22% were extremely satisfied, 61% were satisfied, 9%

were moderately satisfied, 3% were somewhat satisfied, and 5% were unsatisfied. The student's grades were categorised into three levels, excellent, good, and general, and compared before and after the integration. Before integration, only 10 students scored at the excellent level, 35 at the good level, and 45 at the average level. However, after integration, 22 students scored at the excellent level, 56 at the good level, and 12 at the average level. The findings indicate that integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course improved the teaching effect and students' learning level.

6. Conclusion

The study has several contributions. First, the findings of this study can be used as a guide to effective teaching and learning approaches to the Colour Composition course and other artistic Design Courses. Second, very few previous studies have tested the effect of teaching and learning after integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the course. This study examined the effect of teaching and learning after integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art into the Colour Composition course. The findings suggested that integrating Chinese ethnic and folk art in the Colour Composition course improved teaching and learning. Third, the findings of this study can provide teachers, researchers, and students with a more precise understanding of Chinese ethnic and folk art and Chinese traditional culture, as well as raise their awareness of the importance of promoting Chinese ethnic and folk art.

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