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Demographic Factors Influencing Music Teachers' Attitudes Toward World Music Teaching in China

Chun Mei Zhuang and Kok Chang Pan

ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the demographic factors affecting Chinese music teachers' attitudes toward world music teaching in China. Through electronic questionnaires issued online, a total of 1,368 participants completed *A Survey of Music Teachers' Attitudes Toward World Music Teaching*, which includes demographic information and twenty Likert-type items. The results showed that two independent variables of "gender" and "whether teachers had received training in world music after entry" did not influence Chinese music teachers' attitudes and practices in world music teaching. Furthermore, it could be speculated that the teachers, especially those who were 20-34 years old with a master's degree/Ph.D. and 1-10 years of teaching experience, as well as good at Western instruments, studied world music courses, graduated from a comprehensive university, and with teaching places located in the provincial capital cities, leaned more toward ethnomusicological and multicultural consciousness in world music teaching.

Keywords: Attitudes, Chinese Music Teachers, Demographic Variables, World Music Teaching.

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C. M. Zhuang *
Research Scholar, Faculty of Creative Arts, University Malaya (UM), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
(e-mail: zhuangchunmei@siswa.um.edu.my)
ORCID: 0000-0001-5297-5991
K. C. Pan
Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Malaya (UM), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
(e-mail: pankc@um.edu.my)
ORCID: 0000-0003-1379-6645

Corresponding Author

I. Introduction

As an important item in multicultural education, World Music Education has long been recognized for its value. In 1998, the International Music Council held a discussion on music education in a multicultural society. The conference pointed out that the teaching of cultural diversity in music education could help break down existing cultural boundaries, increase social respect and understanding across borders, reduce racial tensions in schools, build new cultural identities and social consensus, satisfy human curiosity, and bring happiness to participants (Traasdahl, 1998). Therefore, the broader goal of world music teaching is not only to understand music itself but also to care about people, society, and the world through music.

With the development of music education, Western art music as the core and basis of the music curriculum is now generally questioned and even opposed (McPherson, 2006). The International Society for Music Education (ISME) also continues to question and adjust the old music education system and the music teaching model. Goldsworthy (1989) pointed out that listening to European classical music was largely considered an individual private experience—an enjoyment for aesthetic reasons, whereas world music was often seen as part of a collective experience in a culture based on auditory/oral traditions, serving everyday functions. In addition, when teaching Western classical music, teachers focused on introducing "classic" pieces of music from various periods, which were "frozen." In contrast, the literature on world music has shown that "classics" were challenged, while the transmission, flow, and change of music were valued.

Many teaching concepts and methods of world music courses should be different from the appreciation and teaching modes of Western classical music. However, a monoculture centered on Western (art) music still pervades the thinking on music and music education in the Western world and most of its practice (Schippers, 2010). Zhuang and Pan's (2022) survey of Chinese music teachers' attitudes toward world music teaching also showed that Chinese music teachers were influenced more by Western centralist values than by multicultural music education and ethnomusicology, in which human music was interpreted from a cultural perspective.

While teachers play an important role in the implementation of teaching, their attitudes toward teaching different music cultures will directly affect their teaching practices. In addition, many studies have confirmed the influence of teachers' demographic factors on their attitudes toward multicultural music teaching (Wong, 2014; Zhang, 2007; Lu, 2013). As such, this study aims to verify the impacts of the demographic variables of Chinese music teachers on their attitudes toward world music teaching.

Clarifying these factors will help teachers' administrative departments to select target groups and the issues to be targeted in the training of world music teaching for music teachers. Besides playing a reference role in whether some universities should strengthen the teaching of world music courses for students, it also provides advice to the textbook publishing department. Hence, the study aims to address the following questions:

1) Does the “age” variable have significant differences in music teachers' attitudes toward world music teaching?
2) Does the “gender” variable have significant differences in music teachers' attitudes toward world music teaching?
3) Does the “educational level” variable have significant differences in music teachers' attitudes toward world music teaching?
4) Does the “years of teaching” variable have significant differences in music teachers' attitudes toward world music teaching?
5) Does the “musical skill” variable have significant differences in music teachers' attitudes toward world music teaching?
6) Does the "have taken ethnomusicology and world music courses" variable have significant differences in music teachers' attitudes toward world music teaching?
7) Does the "graduated from different types of colleges" variable have significant differences in music teachers' attitudes toward world music teaching?
8) Does the "teaching location" variable have significant differences in music teachers' attitudes toward world music teaching?
9) Does the "had participated in the training of world music teaching" variable have significant differences in music teachers' attitudes toward world music teaching?

II. Literature Review

Peppers’ (2010) study examined teachers’ attitudes toward assessment and their relationships with the demographic factors in Michigan elementary general music classrooms. Respondents who received their last music education degree more than 20 years ago experienced greater difficulty in assessment-related tasks and had more negative attitudes toward the assessment, while those with a moderate number of years (10-19) since their last music education degree believed that they had not been adequately prepared in college. Peppers believed that the relationship between teachers' attitudes toward assessment and their demographic backgrounds might reveal information that is useful for designing degree programs and workshops that are geared toward teachers' needs. Likewise, an examination of the relationship between teachers' attitudes toward suggested assessment improvements and demographic information could also allow colleges and administration to meet teachers' needs.

Butler *et al.* (2007) suggested that, among other factors, preservice teachers’ racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and experiences influenced how they developed as teachers. Consequently, the components of the teacher dimension—to the extent that they are mediated by race, ethnicity, and culture—might impact teacher candidates’ ability to develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions, thus contributing to cross-cultural competence that may influence their preferences for teaching in culturally diverse educational settings as in-service professionals.

Meanwhile, McKoy (2013) investigated the effects of race/ethnicity and the school community setting for early field experience practice and student teaching on music student teachers’ self-reported cross-cultural competence. Participants ($N = 337$) from 36 colleges and universities across the United States completed the survey and the results indicated no significant main effect of school community setting on participants’ cross-cultural competence; however, a significant main effect of race/ethnicity ($p < .05$) was observed for the “Constrain” subscale of the survey. Besides, participants in the racial-ethnic minority also held fewer beliefs and attitudes that would hinder their readiness to teach in culturally diverse educational environments.

There are many studies on the factors that influence the attitudes and practices of general music teachers toward multicultural music education. Moore (1995), for instance, verified that there was no significant correlation between teachers' gender, education level, and attitudes toward multicultural music education. Meanwhile, Petersen (2005) found that age and teaching experience had no significant effect on the multicultural level of general music teachers. However, it is interesting to note that average music teachers from 45 to 54 years of age with more than 16 years of teaching experience had more positive attitudes toward multiculturalism.

The results of Wong's (2014) study in Malaysia were also consistent with Moore’s (1995) and Petersen (2005)’s in the USA. In addition, Wong found that although gender had no significant effect on teachers' levels of multiculturalism, the results (the average results) indicated that women had more positive attitudes

toward multiculturalism than men. Moreover, in Wong's (2014) study, ethnic identity and religion seemed to be important variables affecting the level of multiculturalism among general music teachers. Educational attainment, especially among teachers with master's and doctoral degrees, was also more favorable toward multiculturalism.

Additionally, Zhang (2007) investigated the attitudes of primary and secondary school music teachers in Lanzhou, China, toward multi-cultural music. Among the demographic factors affecting teachers' attitudes, the study found no significant correlation between educational background and teachers' attitudes toward multi-cultural music. The minority teachers did not show obvious demand for multiculturalism, but they showed more negative attitudes than the Han teachers. Furthermore, teachers' music learning experience also had a significant correlation with their attitudes toward multi-cultural music. For instance, teachers who only learned Western instruments had more negative attitudes toward multi-cultural music. Nonetheless, the study found that teachers who enjoyed listening to minority music were more positive about multi-cultural music, while those who enjoyed European classical music showed the opposite.

Lu (2013) investigated the differences in music teachers' views of multicultural music teaching in Junior high schools in New Taipei City, Taiwan, with different background variables such as personal backgrounds (gender, highest education), teaching backgrounds (teacher status, teaching years), and curriculum experience (pre-service, in-service). The results showed that music teachers in the Junior high schools in New Taipei City held similar views of multicultural music teaching, and their views were not affected by different background variables.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Respondents and Procedure

The respondents of this study include music teachers in primary and secondary schools nationwide in China. Considering the representativeness of the samples, the researchers used the simple random sampling technique. Through electronic questionnaires issued online, a total of 1,396 questionnaires were collected from the respondents, of which 1,368 were valid questionnaires with an efficiency of 98%. The questionnaire collection period was from May to November 2019.

B. Instrument

A Survey of Music Teachers' Attitudes Toward World Music Teaching was developed by the researchers. The questionnaire can be divided into two parts.

1) Part one

Your Basic Situation collects a total of 9 demographic information of respondents such as age, gender, education level, and years of teaching. Music teachers provided demographic information about themselves through self-reported items on the survey, and the distribution of the categories in the variables reflects an extensive sample. The characteristics of the respondents are described in Table I.

In China, the source of music teachers in primary and secondary schools mainly comes from the Conservatory of Music, the Academy of Arts, the School of Music in Comprehensive Universities and Normal Universities, as well as various public and private Art Vocational Colleges. Currently, there are 12 Conservatories of Music in China, including the Central Conservatory of Music, which pay more attention to students' professional performance. Due to the small enrollment, it is very rare for students to be admitted to such a conservatory. Those who are strong performers and fail to be admitted to the Conservatories of Music may be admitted to the Academy of Arts. The Conservatory of Music is an institution of higher learning specializing in cultivating talents engaged in music art education and research, whereas the Academy of Arts can be understood as a comprehensive university of arts, offering not only music but also dance, fine arts, drama, media, and so on. The Schools of Music in Comprehensive Universities and Normal Universities recruit students with relatively weak professional abilities but high academic scores. Students with weaker professional ability and lower academic scores may enter various public and private Art Vocational Colleges. In this study, 69.4% of the respondents came from the third category -- Schools of Music in Comprehensive Universities and Normal Universities.

The administrative divisions of the People's Republic of China are composed of provincial-level administrative regions, prefecture-level administrative regions, county-level administrative regions, and township administrative regions. Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Chongqing are called municipalities. They have the same administrative status as provincial-level administrative regions, but they are directly under the central government. According to the administrative divisions of China, the respondents' teaching locations in this study were classified into Municipality, Provincial capital, Prefecture-level city, County-level city, and Rural area.

TABLE I: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MUSIC TEACHERS (N = 1368)

Variable	Categories	N	Percentage（%）
Age (years old)	20-34	542	39.6%
	35-44	642	47.0%
	45-54	174	12.7%
	55 and above	10	0.7%
Gender	Male	160	11.7%
	Female	1,208	88.3%
Education level	Junior college	110	8.0%
	Bachelor's degree	1,158	84.6%
	Master's and above	100	7.4%
Years of teaching	1-5	345	25.2%
	6-10	229	16.7%
	11-15	241	17.6%
	16-20	250	18.3%
	21 and above	303	22.2%
Musical skill	Western musical instrument	372	27.2%
	Chinese musical instrument	209	15.3%
	Vocal	683	49.9%
	Others	104	7.6%
Courses taken	Ethnomusicology	257	18.8%
	World music	115	8.4%
	Both	607	44.4%
	Neither	389	28.4%
Graduated from	Conservatory of music	141	10．3%
	Academy of arts	52	3.8%
	University	949	69.4%
	Art Vocational College	226	16.5%
Teaching location	Municipality	107	7.8%
	Provincial capital	184	13.5%
	Prefecture-level city	362	26.5%
	County-level city	371	27.1%
	Rural area	344	25.1%
Participated in the training of "World Music" teaching	Yes	105	7.7%
	No	1,263	92.3%

2) Part two

The Attitude Survey includes 20 questions. Respondents provide their feedback to each statement using a five-point Likert Scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". To assess the internal consistency of the Attitude Survey, the researchers used Cronbach's alpha to measure the 20 items. Cronbach's alpha is a standard method for measuring the reliability of psychological or educational studies. Generally, the higher the score, the higher the reliability. In basic research, the reliability should reach at least 0.80 to be acceptable. In this study, Cronbach's alpha reached 0.872, thus indicating that the reliability level is good.

To assess the construct validity of the Attitude Survey, the researchers conducted Exploratory Factor Analysis. The goodness-of-fit test results showed a KMO value of 0.884, while the Bartlett test of sphericity indicators reached the significance level. Since all indicators reached a statistically required standard, the factor analysis of the data was deemed appropriate. Additionally, Principal Component Analysis and Varimax Orthogonal Rotation were also used to extract the common factors. The number of factors was determined by the eigenvalues greater than 1, combined with the scree plot. Overall, the results showed a clear five-factor structure, which is consistent with the research assumption, and the Total Variance Explained was 62.248%. In the five-factor structure, the loading was higher than 0.60 and the proportion of each item determined by the common factor was more than 0.50. Therefore, the above data indicated that the questionnaire had a good structure. The five-factor structure is shown in Table II.

TABLE II: 20 ITEMS IN A FIVE-FACTOR STRUCTURE

Item	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
1. Students should learn some representative songs in an authentic manner with native languages rather than in Chinese translations.	0.745	-	-	-	-
2. They should learn the songs unaccompanied if they performed in this manner in their native cultures.	0.698	-	-	-	-
3. The best way to provide students with a deep understanding of a musical genre is through performance.	0.682	-	-	-	-
4. In my world music teaching, performance is an important classroom activity.	0.679	-	-	-	-
5. A world music teaching approach that focuses exclusively on the music and musical concepts is inadequate.	0.667	-	-	-	-

Item	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
6. Teachers should provide students with a cultural context when presenting world music.	0.643	-	-	-	-
7. The music diversity of the world's ethnic groups is well-represented in the textbook you are currently using.	-	0.744	-	-	-
8. The music of Chinese ethnic groups is authentically presented in the textbook you are currently using.	-	0.720	-	-	-
9. The music of the world's ethnic groups is authentically presented in the textbook you are currently using.	-	0.717	-	-	-
10. In the music textbook I am currently using, the cultural context knowledge of world music is well-provided.	-	0.609	-	-	-
11. I am not particularly concerned about authenticity because I believe that if it was printed in the school music texts, then it must be accurate.	-	-	0.758	-	-
12. The knowledge about music and its context was less important than the sound itself.	-	-	0.740	-	-
13. Written music notation is advanced while oral/aural transmission is weak and outdated.	-	-	0.646	-	-
14. The staff notation is a blunt but necessary instrument when conveying some unfamiliar music to readers.	-	-	0.617	-	-
15. The musics of all cultures are equal in value and there is no distinction between advanced and inferior.	-	-	-	0.860	-
16. Music is one of the fine arts concerned with the combination of sounds with a view to the beauty of form and the expression of thoughts or feelings.	-	-	-	0.848	-
17. Music is a product of human behavior in a cultural context.	-	-	-	0.788	-
18. The diversity of music among Chinese ethnic groups is presented enough in the textbook I am currently using.	-	-	-	-	0.750
19. World music education is not suitable for very young children. It should only begin when students are mature enough.	-	-	-	-	0.716
20. I feel unprepared to teach world music.	-	-	-	-	0.631
Eigenvalues	6.135	2.596	1.407	1.301	1.011
Variance explained	30.674	12.982	7.033	6.505	5.054

C. Data Analysis

According to the above five-factor structure, the 20 items in the Attitude Survey were divided into five dimensions: "behavioral intention toward teaching methods" (items 1-6), "evaluation of teaching materials" (items 7-10), "cognition of authenticity, context, notation/oral transmission" (items 11-14), "world view of music" (items 15-17), and "intention to implement teaching" (items 18-20). Each of the nine independent variables collected from Your Basic Situation was compared with the five dimensions. Subsequently, the data collected from the questionnaires were compiled and analyzed using quantitative measures. SPSS 26.0 software was used to process and analyze the collected data statistically, and the statistical methods used mainly include descriptive statistics, the independent sample T-test, analysis of variance, factor analysis, and the Chi-square test.

IV. Results and Discussions

In terms of the comparison of the age variable with the five dimensions in the *Attitude Survey*, the results showed significant differences involving three dimensions, namely "evaluation of teaching materials," "cognition of authenticity, context, and transmission mode," and "intention to implement teaching" among teachers of different age groups. Overall, the scores for teachers aged 20-34 years were lower than those aged 35-44 and 45-54 years. Combining the statements of items in the three dimensions above, the researchers speculated that teachers aged 20-34 years were more ethnomusicological in world music teaching.

There was no significant difference between teachers of different genders in each dimension; thus, gender was not a factor affecting attitudes toward teaching world music. This finding is also consistent with previous studies (Petersen, 2005; Wong, 2014).

In terms of the comparison of the education level variable with the five dimensions of the *Attitude Survey*, the results showed significant differences involving three dimensions, namely "evaluation of teaching materials," "cognition of authenticity, context, and transmission mode," and "intention to implement teaching" among teachers of different education levels. The scores for teachers with a master's degree and above were lower than those who graduated from junior college and were Bachelor's degree holders. Combining the statements of items in the three dimensions above, the researchers speculated that teachers with a master's degree/PhD were more ethnomusicological in world music teaching. Besides, this finding is consistent with Wong's (2014) study in which the educational level, specifically those with a master's degree/PhD, showed more positive attitudes toward multiculturalism.

In terms of the comparison of the years of teaching variable with the five dimensions in the *Attitude Survey*, the results showed significant differences in two dimensions of "evaluation of teaching materials" and "intention to implement teaching" among teachers. Regarding the "evaluation of teaching materials," the scores for teachers with a teaching experience of 1-5 years did not differ from those who have been teaching for 6-10 years but were lower than those who have been teaching for more than 11 years. Meanwhile, the scores for teachers with 6-10 years of teaching did not differ from those with 11-15 years but were lower than those with 16 years or more. As for the "intention to implement teaching," the scores for teachers with 6-10 years of teaching were lower than those in all other groups. Combining the statements of items in the two dimensions above, the researchers speculated that teachers with teaching experience of 1-10 years were more ethnomusicological in world music teaching.

In terms of the comparison of the musical skill variable with the five dimensions of the *Attitude Survey*, the results showed a significant difference in the dimension of "intention to implement teaching" among teachers with different musical skills. Evidently, the score for teachers who were skilled at Western musical instruments was lower than those who were good at vocals and others. Combining the statements of items in the dimension above, the researchers speculated that teachers with the said musical skill, namely Western musical instruments, were more ethnomusicological in world music teaching. This is indeed an interesting finding that further research may examine and account for in the future.

In terms of the comparison of "whether teachers took ethnomusicology and world music course" with the five dimensions of the *Attitude Survey*, the results showed significant differences involving the dimensions of "evaluation of teaching materials, " "cognition of authenticity, context, and transmission mode, " and "intention to implement teaching" among teachers. Unexpectedly, in the above three dimensions, the scores for teachers who had learned world music were lower than those who had learned ethnomusicology. Since the basic theory of world music comes from ethnomusicology, the researchers hypothesized that teachers who had learned world music scores should not be significantly different from those of teachers who had learned ethnomusicology.

In this regard, the researchers boldly inferred that the reason for this phenomenon is attributed to the confusing understanding of the Chinese name for "Ethnomusicology." In addition to the small number of schools offering "Ethnomusicology," schools have mostly offered two more popular courses: "Ethnic and Folk Music" and "Traditional Chinese Music." These are different courses; while "Ethnomusicology" studies music in its social and cultural contexts, the latter still focuses on the study of music itself. Moreover, many teachers could not tell the difference between "Ethnomusicology" and the "Ethnic and Folk Music" or the "Traditional Chinese Music" because they thought they were the same course, and they only understood that "Ethnomusicology" was literally a subject of traditional and folk Chinese music. Although 257 teachers in the present survey claimed that they had taken the course "Ethnomusicology" and 607 teachers claimed that they had taken both along with world music, the researchers speculated that some teachers regarded the "Ethnic and Folk Music" or "Traditional Chinese Music" and other courses as "Ethnomusicology" because of the above reasons.

In terms of the comparison of the types of schools graduated by teachers with the five dimensions of the *Attitude Survey*, the results showed significant differences in the "cognition of authenticity, context, and transmission mode" and "intention to implement teaching" among teachers who graduated from different types of schools. Based on the results related to the above two dimensions, the scores for teachers who graduated from universities were lower than those from conservatories of music. Essentially, this means that teachers who graduated from universities were more likely to be "multicultural" when teaching world music. In contrast, those who graduated from conservatories of music were more likely to be "monocultural." While teachers who graduated from conservatories of music are undoubtedly more professionally competent, in line with Schippers' (2010) assertion: "Ironically, as music students develop toward being professionals, they are likely to focus on a single culture." (p.32)

In terms of the comparison of the teaching location variable with the five dimensions of the *Attitude Survey*, the results showed significant differences in the "evaluation of teaching materials," "cognition of authenticity, context, and transmission mode," and "intention to implement teaching" among teachers with different teaching locations. Overall, in the above three dimensions, the scores for teachers with teaching locations in provincial capitals were lower. Therefore, when teaching world music, teachers with teaching locations in provincial capitals were more likely to be "ethnomusicological."

Based on the results, there were no significant differences in whether the teachers had participated in "world music" training in each dimension of the *Attitude Survey.* This finding, however, is not consistent with the expected assumption; thus, further research on this subject can be carried out in the future to reveal the possible reasons.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

According to the results of the study, the two independent variables of “gender” and “whether teachers had received training in world music after entry” did not influence Chinese music teachers' attitudes and practices toward world music teaching. In this regard, gender is not an influencing variable, and this finding is consistent with the studies of Moore (1995) and Wong (2014). Besides, this also shows that training in multicultural education and world music teaching does not need to be gender specific. The variable "participated in the training of world music teaching" did not affect the teachers' attitudes toward world music teaching, which may be due to the small number of respondents who have received training in world music teaching. Thus, the researchers call on teaching and research departments to actively train music teachers in primary and secondary schools to teach world music. Future studies can also compare the attitudes of trained and untrained teachers with relatively balanced sample proportions.

From the results, the researchers further speculated that teachers who were 20-34 years old and had a master’s degree/Ph.D. and 1-10 years of teaching experience, as well as good at Western instruments, had studied world music courses, and graduated from a comprehensive university, with teaching places located in the provincial capital cities leaned more toward ethnomusicological and multicultural consciousness in world music teaching. In addition, in terms of the variables of “age” and “years of teaching,” the results were inconsistent with those of Petersen (2005), which showed that the average music teachers from 45 to 54 years of age and with more than 16 years of teaching experience had more positive attitudes toward multiculturalism. As such, the reasons for such inconsistent results require further research. Meanwhile, for the “educational level” variable, the results were consistent with those of Wong (2014), since both showed that teachers with a master's degree or above are more multicultural. Nonetheless, future studies can verify whether the influence of other variables on music teachers' attitudes toward world music teaching is consistent with the results of this study.

Excluding the two variables of "gender" and "whether the teachers had participated in the training of world music teaching," the remaining seven variables with significant differences mostly highlighted the three dimensions of "evaluation of teaching materials," "cognition of authenticity, context, and transmission mode," and "intention to implement teaching." There were, however, no significant differences between the variables in the two dimensions of "behavioral intention of teaching methods" and "world view of music." Based on this finding, it is evident that Chinese music teachers had the same attitude toward the issues involved in these two dimensions, while their attitudes toward the issues in the above three dimensions were quite different. Hence, textbook publishers should consider whether world music is well-represented in textbooks and whether the issues of authenticity and cultural context are taken into account. Moreover, the teaching management department should also conduct research and formulate solutions to the issues involved in the two dimensions of "cognition of authenticity, context, and transmission mode" and "intention to implement teaching."

In summary, more universities or music colleges should offer courses in ethnomusicology and world music to cultivate pre-service teachers' understanding of world music teaching. While instructional institutions should train and instruct in-service music teachers in "what, when, and how to teach world music" so that teachers can comprehensively and objectively understand the “authenticity, context, and transmission mode” issues of world music, textbook writers and publishers should also increase the presentation of world music, including Chinese ethnic music, and pay further attention to the authenticity of the music and the relevant cultural context.

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