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Research on the Teaching Reform and Practice of Packaging Design Course from the Perspective of Rural Revitalization

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Abstract

Under the goal of the national rural revitalization strategy, this paper explores teaching reform and practice in the packaging design course. Focusing on design-related classes from the perspective of rural revitalization, and considering that packaging design courses emphasize both theory and practice, this paper analyzes the importance of teaching reform, existing problems in teaching, the content of reform, teaching methods, and evaluation criteria. It highlights the use of blended teaching in the design education process and the implementation of multi-dimensional teaching evaluation. The results demonstrate that the teaching reform model for packaging design courses, viewed from the perspective of rural revitalization, can boost students' proactive engagement and enthusiasm for rural development, spark their interest in learning, and enhance overall teaching quality.

Keywords

Rural revitalization, Packaging design course, Teaching reform.

1. Introduction

In 2018, the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China introduced the construction goals for the rural revitalization strategy, which are "prosperous industries, pleasant living environment, civilized rural customs, effective governance, and prosperous life." These goals promote rural revitalization and cultural confidence in China. To support the service of colleges and universities to rural areas and address the needs of the rural revitalization strategy, the Ministry of Education issued an important document, the "Action Plan for Scientific and Technological Innovation in Rural Revitalization of Higher Education Institutions (2018-2022)," guiding colleges and universities to conduct in-depth research and development in rural regions.

Currently, research and practice related to rural revitalization are progressing in various colleges and universities across multiple disciplines. Design research primarily focuses on fields such as art design, environmental art design, and visual communication design, with numerous studies conducted in these areas. For example, Liu Yuan's "Practical Exploration of Rural Revitalization Space Design Course (Decoration, 2023)" [1] uses Fengjiazhai Village in Qianjiang as a case study to explore practical teaching on rural revitalization space transformation, focusing on teaching implementation and reflection. It is believed that during rural revitalization efforts in colleges and universities, attention should be given to preserving and revitalizing rural cultural contexts, building an educational ecological chain, and increasing awareness of responsibility, among other priorities. Research on visual communication design for rural revitalization has examined entire disciplines, such as Chen Sha and Li Linping's "Exploration of Practical Teaching Reform of Visual Communication Design Major under the Background of Rural Revitalization (Journal of Xingtai Polytechnic College, 2023)," [2] which analyzes the main challenges faced in training visual communication design professionals in this context and proposes reform measures for practical teaching in this field. There are also

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studies focusing on specific courses like packaging design and graphic creativity within the visual communication design major, such as Li Jingjie's "Teaching Reform Practice of Integrating Regional Cultural IP into Packaging Design Courses under the Background of Rural Revitalization (Packaging Engineering, 2023)." [3] This work examines the teaching model aimed at cultivating three objectives, one purpose, five teaching dimensions, and three skill areas when incorporating regional cultural IP into agricultural product packaging design. Additionally, Tao Nan, Du Juan, and Dao Wei's "Research on the Teaching Reform of Graphic Creative Design Course in Higher Vocational Colleges under the Background of Rural Revitalization (Shanghai Packaging, 2023)" [4] analyzes the teaching goals, organization process, and the outcomes and reflections of the course.

Rural governance in foreign countries has adopted various models relatively early, such as the urban-rural integration model in the United States, the rural organization reform and cultural restoration policies in France, the New Village movement in South Korea, the rural-building movement in Japan, and participatory design in Northern Europe. The existing literature has explored these topics to varying extents. However, there are relatively few sources specifically focused on integrating rural development into teaching practices. Nonetheless, relevant visual materials can offer compelling evidence for this topic, particularly the packaging design featuring traditional colors in Japan and the brand image design of Marseille soap, which incorporates rural culture in France.

Numerous studies have been conducted on rural revitalization design, both domestically and internationally. This project focuses on analyzing the meaning and importance of "Packaging Design" teaching from the perspective of design empowering rural revitalization, exploring problems, and proposing teaching models, practical methods, as well as assessment approaches and course testing methods, to achieve the goal of using design education to support rural revitalization.

2. The Importance of Teaching Reform in Packaging Design Courses from the Perspective of Rural Revitalization

"Packaging Design" is a course for the Visual Communication Design major that emphasizes integrating theory with practical design, while also fostering students' innovative thinking and hands-on skills. The course covers an integrated approach to packaging, including containers, structures, and visual imagery. It also involves the overall design of trademarks, text, graphics, colors, layouts, and other elements. [5] Through this course, students can thoroughly and systematically learn the theories and methods of packaging design, developing their ability to connect concepts with real-world practice. This prepares them to understand packaging design planning comprehensively and to participate in practical, hands-on projects.

①Improve the values, morality, and sense of responsibility of students majoring in visual communication design. The courses involved in this project should first focus on cultivating students' moral principles and appreciation for the countryside, traditions, and a willingness to dedicate their lives to these values. Only through this approach can they become capable successors for rural development and construction. This will strengthen students' sense of self-identity in serving rural areas and society. [6]

② Enrich practical teaching methods for visual communication design and improve students' hands-on skills in design. Unlike traditional approaches, students' design practice involves non-urbanized projects, which train them to deeply connect traditional culture with urban culture and modern civilization in their work.

③ Advance the development of design ethics education. This initiative incorporates social issues, including poverty, resource distribution, and social morality, into design teaching, creating a learning environment that emphasizes a sense of design responsibility, sharp

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business insight, and awareness of social problems. Its goal is to cultivate designers with social ideals, a sense of responsibility, and the ability to address complex issues, thereby fostering growth in design ethics education.

3. Teaching Reform of Packaging Design Courses from the Perspective of Rural Revitalization

3.1. Issues in Our School's Packaging Design Instruction in the Context of Design Empowering Rural Revitalization

Within the context of the new liberal arts, the teaching requirements for our school's packaging design course are that students, through learning and practice, develop the ability to solve practical problems, apply their knowledge to create comprehensive packaging that meets market demands, and stay current with the latest trends in packaging design. Students are expected to be inspired by current events and engage with the world around them. Teachers guide students to inherit and promote the essence of China's rich traditional culture through creative practice, cultivating their practical skills and innovative spirit, enhancing their values and cultural confidence, and fostering and practicing core socialist values. In the context of design empowering rural revitalization, the issues existing in our school's packaging design course are:

① The contradiction between design teaching and practice, as well as the limitations of rural revitalization projects, somewhat restricts students' enthusiasm and creativity in design. At the same time, students' theoretical knowledge of rural revitalization tends to be weak, and their understanding of the theories is often superficial and lacks depth. There is a disconnect between practical results and actual demands.

② The contradiction between art design and the user market, with design achievements focusing more on personal experience and judgment, lacking validation from users and the market, and communication barriers caused by the limited aesthetic standards of rural objects. The disconnect between the design and production processes, insufficient understanding of technology and costs, and lowered efficiency in industrializing design further hinder progress.

3.2. Application Methods of "Packaging Design" Teaching Reform from the Perspective of Design Empowering Rural Revitalization

The "Trinity" refers to the three main groups involved in the Visual Communication Design major: the school, teachers, and students, as well as rural areas and villagers, who unite to achieve the goal of rural revitalization. The teaching reform of this course is implemented in five key areas: teaching ideas, content, methods, practice, and evaluation.

①In terms of teaching approach, aside from providing knowledge of packaging design courses and developing students' design skills, it is also crucial to guide students' outlook on life and values. This includes fostering a love for the countryside, a passion for tradition, and a willingness to contribute, as well as nurturing their morals and values in life. Design assistance involves reconstructing, rather than just renovating, rural ecological culture. It is essential to protect the green mountains and clear waters of the homeland, as well as maintain the ecological character of the countryside. Through design strategies such as ideological and political education in courses and rural projects, the gap between students and rural revitalization is brought closer.

China is rich in "local specialties" resources. By exploring and developing the cultural and historical value of these local products, it can effectively promote regional economic growth and the revitalization of rural industries. In this context, various well-known national competitions have launched and hosted events titled "Design Empowering Local Specialties," such as the "Milan Design Week - Exhibition of Outstanding Works by Teachers and Students of

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Design Disciplines in Chinese Universities" event, which jointly initiated and hosted the "Design Empowering 'Local Specialties' to Support Rural Revitalization" public welfare track, along with the China Good Idea Rural Tourism Design Special Competition, among others. Through participation in these competitions, students learn to gather information, understand rural brands, develop an interest in rural products, and innovate packaging designs for local specialties.

②In terms of teaching content, the design projects for rural enterprises are integrated into the packaging design courses, blending practical teaching with rural production services to achieve the goal of design assistance. During the course, local specialties from Jiangxi Province, where our school is located, were chosen as design materials, such as Gannan navel oranges, Gannan tea oil, Fuliang tea, Nanfeng tangerines, Chongren free-range chicken, Taihe black-bone chicken (Figure 1), Guangfeng Majia pomelo, Jinggang pomelo, Guangchang white lotus, Xiushui Ninghong tea, Ningdu yellow chicken, and Yichun rice, to carry out the course's design practice. Students are encouraged to submit their work to competitions after class. They are very familiar with the region's agricultural products. During the early stages of collecting research materials, they showed their love for the countryside. The design plans are highly innovative, extending beyond existing agricultural product packaging. The colors and patterns reflect the simplicity of modern design, as well as the visual impact of bold colors.

Figure 1. Student packaging design work - Taihe Black-bone Chicken

Figure 2. Packaging Design of Agricultural Products in Wujia Village

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Figure 3. Packaging design of tree ear mushrooms

③ Regarding teaching methods, a mix of in-class and after-class, online and offline, as well as on-campus and rural approaches is used. In the design plan for agricultural products, students are tasked with developing a comprehensive and rigorous learning process that promotes logical thinking and design argumentation through investigation, interviews, data collection, design plan argumentation, and production. Flexible teaching methods help create easier communication between students and teachers. Data collection, scheme argumentation, production, and presentation of schemes help students improve their design and expression skills, ensuring alignment between theory and practice, as well as between schemes and their presentations.

④ In terms of teaching practice, it is necessary to incorporate real questions and exercises from rural packaging design projects. Students are divided into various groups, such as data collection teams and team creation groups, to design packaging for agricultural products. Encouraging student teams to collaborate with villagers on scheme design can not only provide design education support to villagers but also promote a positive cycle of rural design culture development. The selected packaging design involved students participating in the production process, learning about commercial printing technology, cost estimation, and other related issues. During their involvement in the rural revitalization efforts in Wujia Village, students communicated with villagers. They considered the added value of packaging materials in several agricultural product designs, such as the "Spear Sugarcane" series packaging, the "Yimuyuan" red grass sugar series packaging, the "Tea Tree Mushroom" packaging for the mushroom cooperative, and the packaging for Wujia Village eggs and local honey. High-quality, cost-effective packaging bags were used as design materials, which helped reduce overall packaging costs. (Figure 2.3)

Regarding teaching evaluation, a multifaceted approach is used to overcome the limitations of traditional single assessments by teachers. The course grades are thoroughly evaluated based on three components: teaching objective assessment, student self-evaluation, and evaluation of rural projects. The specific evaluation ratios are shown in Table 1.

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Table 3. Evaluation matrix of curriculum teaching objectives

Course grade composition and proportion	Assessment link	ratio	Assessment/evaluation rules
50% of normal grade	Formative assessment (Teaching Objectives and Students' Self-Evaluation)	10% in online learning	Help students consolidate classroom knowledge and complete the regular assignments in the textbook assigned after each chapter.
		Offline discussion 5%	Classroom tests, active discussions in class.
		Class performance 5%	Class interaction, homework, etc.
		Design creative thinking 10%	Whether to use visual design principles to express design creativity.
		Creative thought expression 20%	The use of expressive techniques in the process of thinking.
Final grade 50%	Summative evaluation (Teaching objective evaluation and rural project evaluation	Composition 10%	The composition of the work is complete and has an intense expression.
		10% creativity	The works are innovative and unique.
		The sense of form and vision of the work is 20%	The work has a strong sense of form and visual impact.
		Production 10%	The design is complete, and the production is exquisite.

3.3. Effectiveness Verification of the "Three-in-One" Teaching Model in the "Packaging Design" Course from the Perspective of Design Empowering Rural Revitalization

There are three types of inspection methods: teaching objective inspection, student achievement inspection, and market inspection. The teaching objectives are evaluated using the criteria outlined in the teaching syllabus. Students' achievements are assessed based on their self-assessments, the adoption of their packaging design works by rural enterprises, and the awards received for their entries. Promote the growth of sales channels and volume through the packaging design of agricultural products as a market testing method. In the short term, assessments of teaching objectives and student outcomes have already yielded initial results. Students have won national and provincial awards in the 2025 competition. The specific details are shown in Figure 4-6.

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Figure 4. Second Prize in the National Competition of Milan Design Week

Figure 5. Second Prize in the Provincial Competition of China's Good Ideas

Figure 6. Second Prize in the Provincial Competition for Future Designers

4. Conclusion

Research on the teaching reform and practice of packaging design courses from the perspective of rural revitalization has achieved good results by engaging students in real-world projects and competitions. Some packaging designs have been adopted and produced in rural areas, and others have won national or provincial awards. However, the promotion and application of this teaching method also need attention. The effects can be categorized into two types: one is the invisible effect. Villages and enterprises offer material or spiritual rewards to students who adopt or significantly contribute to their projects, which can enhance students' sense of self-identity in serving the countryside and society. At the same time, collaboration among teachers,

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students, and villagers in designing projects can also serve as a form of design education and support for the villagers. The other is the explicit effect. The design of agricultural product packaging directly helps to grow sales channels and increase sales volume. It should be noted that although the impact of the invisible effect can be measured through questionnaires and other methods, the sense of recognition and educational support are long-term processes. Therefore, only sustained cooperation can achieve meaningful results.

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