

SURVEY THE CURRENT FLUTE TEACHING IN QINGDAO PRIMARY SCHOOL IN QINGDAO SHANDONG CHINA

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Abstract

This study aims to evaluate the current state of flute education in primary schools across Qingdao, Shandong, China. Amidst growing recognition of the benefits of musical education in early childhood development, this research focuses on identifying the key characteristics and challenges faced in the realm of flute teaching. The primary objective is to provide a comprehensive survey of the methodologies, curriculum content, teacher qualifications, and student engagement strategies employed in the local primary schools. Through a qualitative research approach, the study employs interviews, classroom observations, and content analysis to gather in-depth data from school teachers, administrators, and students. The research question, "How can the level of flute education in Qingdao primary schools be improved?" guides the investigation towards actionable insights and recommendations.

This paper highlights significant findings that not only reflect the current landscape of flute education but also propose strategic enhancements to bolster the quality and effectiveness of music teaching practices. By addressing the educational gaps and leveraging the strengths identified through this study, it aims to contribute to the enrichment of the arts education framework within Qingdao's primary education system.

Keywords: Flute education; Flute techniques; Flute playing; Music teaching methods

Introduction

The flute has a history of nearly a hundred years in China. In the early days, due to the scarcity of flute players, teachers, music books, and instruments, the level of flute education was uneven. In China, the level of flute education was unable to improve significantly. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, with the development of Chinese cultural and educational undertakings, there has been significant progress in the conditions for playing and teaching the flute. As the flute gradually entered the public eye in China, it found a suitable place in the country. Thus, both performance and teaching have seen better development. In the art of music, the flute possesses a wide range, and its tone is diverse: it can be clear and mellow; soft and hazy, or bright and brilliant. It can play bright and cheerful melodies, as well as hesitant and profound tunes. With its variety of playing styles, it often touches and influences people's emotions. The flute is becoming increasingly popular in China, with many parents encouraging their children to learn it (Chen, 2023).

With the advancement of quality education, China has successively introduced a number of policies and guiding suggestions related to instrumental music teaching in primary and secondary schools, promoting the rapid development of instrumental music education in these schools. Now, students have the opportunity to learn a variety of instruments, including traditional ones like piano and violin, as well as wind instruments that were not widely popular in China in the past, such as the flute, oboe, bassoon, and French horn, which have gradually gained public recognition and affection (Yan, 2013).

Since the 1980s, China has incorporated instrumental music teaching into the music teaching activities of primary and secondary schools. Practice has proven that instrumental music teaching is an effective carrier for music education in schools and an indispensable part of improving aesthetic education in schools. With years of accumulated experience in introducing small instruments into classrooms, the variety of instruments has also increased. From the initial 7-hole flute, harmonica, and ocarina, the range has expanded to include instruments like the violin, piano, and flute (Li, 2024).

In today's comprehensive advancement of quality education, music, particularly instrumental performance, plays a crucial role in cultivating students' interest, expressiveness, and creativity in music learning. This is especially true during childhood, which is the golden age for beginning music education. The practice of playing instruments not only genuinely immerses children in music by stimulating various senses and emotions in creation and appreciation, but it also enriches their extracurricular activities and enhances their concentration. Learning an instrument can ignite a child's imagination and creativity, which is essential for their development (Zhang, 2018).

As instrumental music education becomes increasingly comprehensive in Chinese schools, the effects on student development are multifaceted. Recognizing the importance of music education, many educational institutions have started to provide specialized training programs for teachers, aiming to improve the quality and effectiveness of music teaching. This focus on professional development helps ensure that educators are well-equipped with the latest pedagogical techniques and a deep understanding of musical artistry. As a result, teachers can more effectively engage students and foster a more enriching learning environment.

Moreover, the inclusion of diverse musical instruments in the curriculum has facilitated a broader cultural appreciation among students. By learning instruments like the flute, which require significant control and expression, students not only enhance their musical skills but also develop patience and persistence. These qualities are invaluable and extend beyond the music classroom, influencing students' academic and personal lives (Ho, 2018).

Research Objectives

1. To survey the current state of flute education in Qingdao's primary schools.

Literature Reviews

Flute pedagogy in China: Flute pedagogy in China has experienced significant evolution, shaped profoundly by the nation's rich musical heritage intertwined with the progressive adoption of Western classical music practices. The Western concert flute's introduction into the Chinese educational framework is a relatively recent phenomenon, which has gained substantial prominence in the past few decades, particularly following China's cultural and economic liberalization post-1978. Originally, China was renowned for its traditional bamboo flutes like the *dizi* and *xiao*, integral to Chinese folk and classical music ensembles. The integration of the Western concert flute began earnestly in the early 20th century but saw rapid acceleration after 1978, driven by major educational reforms and an openness to international cultural exchanges. Prominent conservatories, such as the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing and the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, have been at the forefront of this transformation. These institutions have played a pivotal role in adopting and adapting Western flute teaching methods and curricula, often enriched through workshops and masterclasses led by internationally renowned flutists, thereby fostering a rich, hybrid pedagogical approach (Waters, 2014).

The influence of both native and international educators on the development of flute pedagogy in China has been profound. Many Chinese flutists who pursued advanced studies abroad have returned, bringing with them a synthesis of Western technical proficiency and traditional Chinese musical aesthetics. This cross-pollination of styles has been further advanced by educators such as Zhao Songting and Yu Xunfa, who, while primarily known for their expertise in traditional Chinese flutes, have also contributed significantly to the broader woodwind pedagogy in the country. The curriculum in Chinese music conservatories today offers a comprehensive mix of technical studies, an extensive repertoire that includes Western classical pieces, contemporary works, and traditional Chinese flute compositions. This diverse curriculum aims not only to cultivate technical skills and musicality but also to instill a deep appreciation and understanding of both Western and Chinese musical traditions, thereby nurturing versatile musicians who are proficient across a broad spectrum of musical styles (Winzenburg, 2018).

Performance opportunities and competitions play an essential role in the professional development of flute students in China, providing platforms for both national and international exposure. Students frequently participate in solo recitals, chamber music, and orchestral performances, which are integral components of their educational experience. Competitions are particularly valued, serving as crucial benchmarks for talent and offering significant opportunities for career advancement. In recent years, there has also been a significant shift towards integrating digital tools and online resources into flute pedagogy. This digital transformation enhances traditional teaching methods and broadens the scope of educational possibilities, allowing for a more interconnected and technologically savvy learning environment (Toff, 2012).

Despite these advancements, one of the persistent challenges in Chinese flute pedagogy is balancing the deep-rooted respect for traditional Chinese music culture with the techniques and methodologies of Western classical music education. This balance is crucial in maintaining cultural authenticity while embracing global musical perspectives. Nevertheless, this dynamic also creates unique opportunities for innovative musical expressions and methodologies that are distinctly Chinese. Overall, flute pedagogy in China is characterized by a dynamic progression towards musical excellence, marked by a commitment to integrating diverse musical perspectives and adapting to the evolving demands of the global musical landscape (Baumann, 2000).

Overall, flute pedagogy in China is characterized by a dynamic progression towards musical excellence, marked by a commitment to integrating diverse musical perspectives and adapting to the evolving demands of the global musical landscape. Through participation in master classes, workshops, and by utilizing a range of digital resources, students are exposed to a wide spectrum of educational opportunities. This ongoing evolution underscores the enduring relevance of flute pedagogy in China and its crucial role in cultivating the next generation of skilled musicians.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research method, utilizing key informants interviews and classroom observations to analyze the current state of flute teaching in primary schools in Qingdao, Shandong, China.

Key informant 1: Liu Xinqi

Expert judge of China Wind Music Society, standing director of flute Professional Committee of China Music Association, President of Qingdao Musicians Association Flute Society.

He was the permanent conductor and deputy director of the Qingdao Opera House Symphony Orchestra.

Qingdao University, visiting professor of Ocean University of China, external flute teacher of Nanjing Road Primary School, Chinese Wind music small Bell, Asian Flute League China Regional selection, China Flute Federation and other competitions as a judge.

Key informant 2: Liang Shujuan

She is a professor at Qingdao University and an external flute teacher at Qingdao University Road Primary School. Master's degree in flute performance, Central Conservatory of Music. More than 20 years of flute teaching experience.

Key informant 3: Feng yong

He graduated from the China Conservatory of Music as a master's student. He has 16 years of teaching experience. Jiangsu Road flute external teacher. The students have won many honors, such as the Little Admiralty Silver Award, the Singapore International Venue Competition Gold Medal and so on

Results

The study conducted a comprehensive analysis of the current state of flute education in primary schools in Qingdao, Shandong, China. The findings reveal several key insights and challenges that impact the effectiveness of flute teaching in these institutions.

Traditional Teaching Methods: It was observed that the prevalent teaching methodologies heavily rely on traditional approaches that focus on technical skill development through rote learning and repetition. While these methods are effective in building foundational skills, they often fail to engage students creatively, limiting their overall musical development and enthusiasm for learning the flute.

Challenges in Flute Education: Several challenges were identified, Limited Resources: Many schools face a shortage of quality instruments and teaching materials, which hampers the ability to provide a comprehensive learning experience.

Inadequate Teacher Training: Teachers often lack specialized training in flute pedagogy, which affects their ability to teach effectively and cater to the diverse needs of students.

Large Class Sizes: The high student-to-teacher ratio limits personalized attention, resulting in a less tailored educational experience for students of varying abilities.

Student Engagement: The traditional methods employed often lead to passive participation from students, reducing their motivation and engagement in the learning process.

Expert Recommendations: Diversification of Teaching Methods: Incorporating interactive and student-centered teaching approaches, such as multimedia resources and group activities, can enhance student engagement and make learning more dynamic.

Balanced Curriculum Content: Integrating music theory and creative exercises alongside technical training can provide a more holistic music education, fostering both technical proficiency and creative expression.

Professional Development for Teachers: Continuous professional development through workshops, online courses, and seminars focused on flute pedagogy is crucial for improving teaching quality and effectiveness.

Enhanced Student Engagement: Tailoring lessons to student interests, offering opportunities for performances, and encouraging collaborative projects can significantly boost student motivation and involvement in flute education.

These findings underscore the importance of evolving flute education practices in Qingdao's primary schools to address current challenges and improve overall educational outcomes. By implementing the recommended strategies, schools can enhance the quality of flute education, better engaging students and equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed for their musical development.

Discussions

From the findings of this research provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of flute education in Qingdao primary schools, highlighting both the strengths and areas for improvement within the educational framework. Through qualitative analysis, it was observed that while there are well-established methodologies and dedicated educators, the challenges in terms of resource allocation, teacher training, and student engagement remain significant. The data suggests that a more structured approach to curriculum development, coupled with continuous professional development for teachers, could greatly enhance the effectiveness of flute education in this region. Additionally, fostering a more supportive and resource-rich environment may contribute to higher levels of student motivation and engagement, which are critical for long-term success in music education related with Eccles (1999) Participation in music activities such as ensemble playing and choir singing also plays a pivotal role in their development, providing substantial opportunities for social interaction. These collaborative musical endeavors are not just about learning

notes and rhythms but also about building teamwork, confidence, and self-expression within a communal setting. Learning to work in harmony with others and adjusting performances to align with a group enhances their social skills and their ability to cooperate with peers.

New Knowledges

This study conducted an in-depth investigation into the current state of flute education in primary schools in Qingdao, Shandong, China, revealing major issues and challenges in the teaching practices and providing corresponding recommendations for improvement. The findings indicate that although flute education in Qingdao primary schools has made some progress in developing technical skills, it still faces challenges such as limited resources, insufficient teacher training, and a lack of personalized attention due to large class sizes. Moreover, the reliance on traditional teaching methods has led to reduced student engagement and enthusiasm, restricting their overall musical development.

Conclusions

To enhance the quality of flute education in Qingdao's primary schools, the study proposes several key recommendations. First, teaching methods need to be diversified by incorporating multimedia resources and group activities to increase interactivity and student engagement. Second, the curriculum should be more balanced, integrating not only technical training but also music theory and creative exercises to help students gain a comprehensive understanding of and ability to apply musical knowledge. Furthermore, continuous professional development for teachers is essential, and schools should provide ongoing training opportunities to improve their teaching skills and keep up with modern educational techniques. Lastly, increasing student interest and engagement through personalized lessons, performance opportunities, and collaborative projects can significantly boost students' motivation to learn.

Overall, this study not only highlights the current issues in flute education but also offers practical recommendations for addressing them. Implementing these suggestions will help improve the quality of flute education

in Qingdao's primary schools, providing students with a richer and more effective musical education experience, while promoting their overall development in both musical skills and creativity.

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