The Physiological Characteristics and Teaching Music for Elderlies in China

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Abstract

Developing elderly education is an important measure to actively address the issue of aging population in China, and it is also conducive to the stability of the country and society. Currently, more and more elderly people are willing to choose to learn saxophone as one of their hobbies after retirement. However, the teaching and research of elderly musical instruments in China is still in the exploratory stage. The traditional methods of music education for the elderly no longer meet the development standards of modern music education, and the spiritual and cultural needs and standards of the elderly are constantly improving.

Keywords: Physiological Characteristics; Teaching Music; Elderlies in China

Introduction

The psychological characteristics of the elderly refer to changes in their psychological abilities and characteristics, including changes in memory, intelligence, thinking, personality traits, and emotions and willpower. The psychological aging of the elderly may occur with the decline of physiological functions, and some factors may lead to some psychological problems such as depression (high incidence age between 50-60 years old) and loneliness (30% of elderly people aged 60 to 70 experience loneliness, while 60% are over 80 years old), inferiority complex, retirement syndrome, empty nest syndrome, etc Human fluid intelligence, namely the ability to learn new things and handle complex relationships, will gradually decline. However, the intelligence of the elderly, namely the ability to apply the knowledge and experience they have already learned, will actually improve due to acquired learning and experience accumulation, such as language and writing skills, judgment, association skills, and emotional understanding. Therefore, elderly people with richer life experiences have a stronger ability to understand musical emotions when learning musical instruments, and they also need a way of entertainment that can enrich material and cultural life and express their inner emotions (Zhou, 2010).

* Received: October 27, 2023; Revised: November 29, 2023; Accepted: November 30, 2023

Physiological characteristics of the elderly

Physiological characteristics: The body organ function of elderly people will deteriorate with age. Mainly reflected in the perception system, musculoskeletal system, and other aspects. But as long as the rules and training methods are mastered, it will not affect the normal life of the elderly and their learning of musical instruments.

In terms of perceptual systems, most people obtain external information through perception such as sight, hearing, smell, and touch. But perceptual ability will experience a certain degree of decline with age. For the vast majority of elderly people, the impact of this decline on daily life is not significant, and active training can delay the degradation of cognitive function in the elderly.

In terms of vision, due to changes in the physiological structure of the visual organs, the visual sensitivity and visual information processing ability of elderly people will decrease to a certain extent, such as the symptoms of presbyopia. However, as long as wearing presbyopic glasses, it will not affect learning and practicing the saxophone.

In terms of hearing, the hearing range of the general human ear is generally 20-20000 Hz, while the hearing range of the elderly is generally 50-10000 Hz. This is because as people age, the cells at the base of the cochlea that perceive high-frequency sound degenerate, leading to a decrease in the ability of elderly people to perceive high-frequency sound, while the decrease in perception of low-frequency parts is not significant. In addition, due to the apoptosis of cochlear cells and auditory nerve channels, elderly people's perception of volume, ability to distinguish sound, and language comprehension will decrease. However, this does not affect elderly people's learning of saxophones, as they can still clearly sense the high, medium, and low pitches of all instruments in the saxophone family.

In terms of the musculoskeletal system, muscle atrophy and degradation of visceral function can prevent elderly people from engaging in vigorous exercise. Therefore, elderly people should choose suitable activities such as learning musical instruments to delay osteoporosis and arthritis, increase joint flexibility and muscle endurance (Clair, 1996).

Learning characteristics of the elderly

The learning characteristics of the elderly determine their educational patterns, and individualized teaching based on their learning characteristics can help improve the quality of teaching for the elderly. Firstly, the ability of elderly people to learn new things is relatively low, and the solidification of their thinking often leads to learning based on past experiences. Secondly, elderly people have a high level of learning motivation and strong self-esteem. Many elderly people have a passion for music but are limited to learning when they are young, so they only have the time and material foundation to pursue their music dreams after retirement. Therefore, they also hope that their success can be recognized and respected by teachers and others. In the learning process, elderly people often value practical skills while neglecting theoretical knowledge, and sometimes are too eager to achieve success. This is mainly concentrated in the early stages of learning music, and sometimes due to incorrect practice methods, it can lead to physical strain after extensive practice, without following the objective laws of learning musical instruments. The last point is that the knowledge structure of the elderly is complex and individual differences are significant, so teachers need to provide targeted teaching based on the characteristics of each student. Many newly retired elderly people are prone to retirement syndrome due to their inability to adapt to new social roles,

living environments, and lifestyle changes. Therefore, it is very necessary to regulate one's body and mind and mobilize one's learning ability by learning musical instruments. In the process of learning music, one can not only appreciate and play beautiful melodies, but also feel the charm of ensemble in cooperation with others. From a physiological perspective, the physical functions of the elderly have passed a period of rapid growth, so the improvement in playing skills will be slow. In terms of intelligence, the fluid intelligence of elderly people, such as learning new things and dealing with complex relationships, such as mechanical memory and recognizing graphic relationships, is no longer the same as before. However, the crystal intelligence of elderly people, such as language and writing ability, judgment, association ability, and emotional understanding ability, will actually improve due to acquired learning and experience accumulation. So when learning musical instruments, the cognitive ability and emotional understanding ability of the elderly are their strengths (Dong, 2009).

Elderly Education in China

China has a large elderly population, and the demand for elderly education is also receiving increasing attention. With the accelerated development of the aging trend,

Elderly education is gradually regarded as one of the important means to solve the problems of the elderly. In China, the development of elderly education still faces a series of challenges, mainly including the following:

Firstly, there is a lack of nationwide coordination agencies. At present, there is no national coordinating agency for elderly education in China, resulting in a lack of overall, systematic, and coordinated development of elderly education. To develop elderly education, it is necessary to mobilize the participation of the entire society. Therefore, the innovation of the elderly education system and mechanism is crucial. Through the innovation of the system and mechanism, we can enhance and liberate social vitality to participate in elderly education.

Secondly, there are significant differences in learning motivation and abilities among the elderly. China has a vast territory, and there are differences in learning motivation and abilities among the elderly. It is necessary to develop different education plans based on different groups and needs. Especially for the elderly people who have grown up in the new era of China (Jia, 2022).

Mouth, due to significant improvements in educational opportunities, physical health, and social participation, is also considered to have different learning needs from its peers in previous eras.

Thirdly, the learning environment of elderly education is not clear enough, and there is a lack of effective connection with other resources. Strengthen the overall planning of elderly education, establish a sharing mechanism between elderly education and other educational resources, and incorporate community elderly education into the public service system, utilizing public service resources such as community service institutions to serve community elderly education.

We need to rely on national open universities to build a national university for the elderly, and establish a national platform for sharing elderly education resources and public services. On March 3, 2023, the National University for the Elderly was officially unveiled. The National University for the Elderly is based on the national open university education system and carries out online and offline teaching activities for the elderly nationwide. To provide resource sharing, teaching guidance, and public services for universities for the elderly

at all levels and types across the country, and to play a demonstration and leading role in the innovative development of elderly education. We adopt a five level education system and extend our educational network to counties, townships, and villages, continuously meeting the diverse learning needs of the elderly. According to the major strategic deployment made by the Party Central Committee and the State Council, the National University for the Elderly has officially been listed. The news about the official unveiling of the National University for the Elderly within a week of its listing received a warm response. The formation of public opinion is a concentrated reflection of the public's views and opinions on a certain event or phenomenon, therefore public opinion reflects the public's attitude and opinions. In today's society, with the rise of the internet and social media, the influence of public opinion is increasing, and it can quickly spread and spread, attracting widespread attention and discussion. So what is the overall expectation of public opinion for the National Elderly University, a national level elderly education institution? What are the requirements for learning needs and content settings? What are the requirements for learning methods, community links, and other learning scenarios? This article explores and reflects on the above issues through a comprehensive analysis and case study of the news and public opinion on the official unveiling of the National University for the Elderly.

Teaching music for elderly

The necessity of music education for the elderly

In fact, music education for the elderly plays a very important role in the overall elderly education. Learning music not only allows the elderly to gradually relax their body and mind, but also enriches their spiritual and cultural life through the display of music. Firstly, the majority of middle-aged and elderly people employed on the job are able to occupy most of their life time with fulfilling work content, and use the joy of work to meet their personal spiritual needs. However, when these middle-aged and elderly people retire from work, their relaxed new life makes it difficult for them to adapt, and they have been living in this new life for a long time, The spiritual needs of the elderly will continue to increase, but their actual spiritual life cannot be met, which in turn affects their physical and mental health and quality of life. Secondly, due to the fact that elderly people have already undergone compulsory education, higher education, and social work, and have rich social experience, in terms of practical education choices, most elderly people often pursue practical and artistic elderly education such as singing, dancing, musical instruments, and painting, and use the important significance of this education to enrich their spiritual and cultural life. In addition, in the actual implementation of music education for the elderly, due to the purifying effect of music, music learning can gradually cultivate a positive and optimistic attitude towards life for the vast majority of elderly students, making a huge contribution to their spiritual life development. From these aspects, it is necessary to carry out music education for the elderly and utilize the charm and advantages of music education for the elderly to develop their spiritual life in the overall development of elderly education (Luo, 2006).

Ways to Promote Music Education for the Elderly

(1) Stimulate interest in music learning and maximize educational objectives

In fact, in order to achieve the long-term development of music education for the elderly and maximize the purpose of music education for the elderly, teachers should clarify the factors that promote education development and the important prerequisites for education implementation. Among them, interest is one of the factors in educational development. While cultivating the music hobbies of elderly students, it can stimulate their interest in music learning and create a very good environment and atmosphere for actual music classrooms. In fact, many elderly students feel lonely and want to enrich their lives through music learning, and choose courses at will, which leads to a decrease in the quality of music education. In addition, many teachers are completely unaware of the importance of stimulating the interest of elderly students in music learning. In music classes, they simply ask students to imitate singing and playing, and impart a pile of boring music theory knowledge. In these teaching methods, there may be a large proportion of elderly students who are not interested in learning music. Teachers' teaching not only affects students' spiritual development, but also leads to more students wanting to give up learning music education. So, in the development of music education for the elderly, teachers should clearly understand the importance of integrating interest factors into education, and clarify that interest is a prerequisite for the development of music education for the elderly. At the same time, it should stimulate the interest of elderly students in music learning and achieve the maximization of educational objectives and effects. Take the piano class as an example. The teaching objects of the piano class for the elderly are all elderly people over 55 years old. The elderly have poor vision, slow notation, and inflexible fingers, making it difficult to master playing skills. How to make the elderly learn the piano happily is a question that teachers need to consider in teaching. Firstly, in the initial stage, the teacher needs to adapt some simple and familiar old songs as the main content of score recognition and hand type practice, to enhance their confidence and interest. After laying the foundation knowledge, they can add improvisation techniques to play some of the students' favorite songs, accompanied by accompaniment, and the way they play and sing by themselves is deeply loved by the students. Secondly, a flexible and interactive teaching mode can be adopted, such as dividing students into two groups, one playing the right hand part and the other playing the left hand part, and then practicing interchangeably. For example, selecting a piano team leader to lead their own group in small performance competitions and other flexible teaching modes. Ensure that students do not feel tired during the learning process, thereby stimulating their interest in piano learning and improving the quality and effectiveness of piano teaching for the elderly (Qi, 2011).

(2) Meeting personal music needs and achieving high-quality classroom teaching

In fact, in music education for the elderly, due to the different personal aesthetic requirements of each student, their needs and standards for music are different. In order to develop the significance of music learning, teachers should make use of educational promotion factors that focus on "needs". While paying attention to the needs of elderly students, they should constantly adjust classroom content to ensure that personal needs and learning interests can complement each other and improve the quality of music teaching, Enrich the spiritual and cultural life of the elderly. However, currently some elderly music teachers are not aware of the importance of students' music needs. In actual music classroom teaching, these teachers will constantly choose songs that they think are better and can highlight the artistic atmosphere

of music as teaching content. However, the content of this part of music may not meet the aesthetic needs of some elderly students, As a result, the quality and effectiveness of actual music education cannot quickly and effectively achieve the expected goals, and the spiritual life of elderly students cannot be effectively developed. For example, taking a vocal class as an example. Firstly, we can start with the creation of classes, designing various classes such as introductory vocals, vocal techniques, vocal performances, choirs, etc., so that elderly students without foundation can choose introductory classes. For some students with foundation, they can also make independent choices based on their comprehensive level, so that they can receive corresponding learning. This method not only enhances students' confidence, It can also effectively address the uneven basic needs of students. In terms of teaching content, teachers can choose some styles that students like, such as square songs, mass songs, grassland songs, collective interactive singing and dancing songs, etc. Then, based on their actual needs, search and refine to write and organize teaching content as the actual teaching direction, and then use this part of music teaching to stimulate the learning interest of elderly students, thereby achieving high-quality classroom teaching.

(3) Build a display platform to achieve good educational outcomes

Music is an art of performance, and it must be achieved through the intermediary process of performance and performance, transforming the notes on the music sheet into sound and conveying the beauty of the art work. Only then can the beauty of music be truly displayed, in order to realize the value of the beauty of the music art work and make it joyful. In the process of learning music, elderly students need more opportunities for expression and communication. On the one hand, it can improve the quality and effectiveness of music education, and on the other hand, emotional investment can gradually enrich the spiritual life of elderly students, continuously exerting the practical significance of music education (Zhang, 2014).

Firstly, teachers can regularly organize various entertainment and performance activities. For example, the "Sunset Red Art Tour" of Guilin Community University adopts a teaching model of "learning and training competition in a one-stop process", combining teaching and practice. The performance competition at the end of each semester presents a stage for students, which is highly sought after by elderly students. Online registrations are filled in less than an hour every semester. Secondly, teachers should create and rehearse music programs that are popular among the elderly. When there is a stage display or competition, students can calmly participate. This not only strengthens the communication and interaction between students, but also in order to better showcase their talents, students actively engage in practice both in and out of class, with no obstacles in class. In class communication is also extremely enthusiastic, and it also stimulates students' enthusiasm for participation, Achieved good educational results.

Overall, the traditional methods of music education for the elderly no longer meet the development standards of modern music education, and the spiritual and cultural needs and standards of the elderly are constantly improving. Therefore, the development requirements of music education for the elderly also need to be innovated and adjusted. Therefore, teachers of music education for the elderly should continuously increase their emphasis on this education. While clarifying the purpose and significance of music education, they should also maximize the educational purpose by stimulating interest in music learning, meeting individual music needs, and striving to build display platforms, thereby ensuring the richness and enrichment of the spiritual and cultural life of the elderly and promoting emotional integration between them,

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Conclusion

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