



A Comparative Study of Music Curriculum in Chinese and French Primary Schools

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ABSTRACT

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Music education is vital to children's intellectual, social, and emotional development. The primary school music education curriculum in China and France are the two most important music education systems in the world. This study attempts to compare the objectives, content, and evaluation of these two curriculum and reveal similarities and contrasts. The main goal of this study is to analyze the primary school music education curriculum in China and France, find out the similarities and differences between these curricula, and evaluate the potential impact these differences may have on the development of music education curricula in China and France. This study uses a comparative analysis method to investigate the music education curriculum in primary schools in China and France. The process of conducting the analysis required interviews with music teachers in both countries, a review of relevant literature, and an examination of curriculum materials. Research results show that primary school music education curriculum in China and France have some common objectives, including developing students' musical skills and cultivating aesthetic abilities. However, there are also significant differences in curriculum objectives, teaching strategies, and evaluation strategies. The study highlights the importance of understanding the cultural and historical context of each country's music education system.

Keywords: France, China, Primary School Music Education, Curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

In China, music education is steeped in traditional cultural concepts. Children are taught to perform on instruments such as the guzheng and erhu. The musical environment is rich and complex, with classical Chinese music intertwined with Western ideas (Everett & Lau, 2004). In France, music education is deeply rooted and covers classical and modern traditions. The curriculum encourages a comprehensive synthesis of concepts, history and performance. Both consider music an intrinsic aspect of education and promote the development of well-rounded individuals wealthy in awareness about cultural forms of expression.

In addition, Chinese music education faces a severe challenge as a result of today's global multiculturalism and the spread of technological information. It was once said by Li Sina, The Deputy Director of the Chinese Musicians' Association's Church of Music: If our music education curriculum and teaching materials remain at the level of the 1920s, we will be delaying the next several generations (Mao, 2009). According to China's People's Daily (Lou, 2023), Chinese music has an excellent cultural tradition with thousands of years of musical history that must not be casually lost; China is a large country, and everything has to be considered in the long term; turning around a small boat is easy, but it is difficult to turn around a large boat. Globally, different music education systems contribute to the inheritance and exchange of various musical cultures. In addition to reflecting the excellent achievements of all human cultures, music curricula should also be used to educate students about the living conditions and cultural experiences of all people around the globe. In researching the theory and practice of Chinese school music education for the 21st century, it is necessary to consider a broader vision and relate to oneself, requiring thinking from two perspectives: firstly, a global observation of music education of all countries and races around the globe; and secondly, a systematic construction of local music education. Since the

early 20th century, when Chinese schools adopted the Western model of music education and teaching, the paradigm has not significantly changed, or there has been a quantitative, but not qualitative change, and the paradigm for music education and teaching is based on the "music craft model", which is based on Western music history and traditional musicological values. A "music craft model" underpins the paradigm of music education and teaching, which is based on the standards and values of Western music history as well as traditional musicological systems. Nowadays, the paradigm of music education and teaching in schools in developed Western countries has undergone a significant transformation, but some of our music educators are still defending the paradigm of music education and teaching that was imported from the West at the beginning of the 20th century. Therefore, the planning of Chinese music education curriculum research is an important project for the 21st century. A new cultural choice and a reorganization of civilization will accompany the reform of the Chinese music education curriculum.

The French primary school music curriculum should be considered as a comparative object of study. To begin with, China and France are located at the two ends of the Eurasian continent, both have a long history and a rich culture. They are like two bright stars, one east and one west, which reflect each other. As a result of the Silk Road, the two countries have historically been connected. During the modern era, France was a dominant force in Europe and embarked on the path of capitalism. There has been an increase in exchanges between China and France, particularly in the field of education. As a result of the industrial revolution in modern France, it has developed economic strength and education and is considered to have the most advanced curriculum concept, curriculum objectives, curriculum content and curriculum evaluation system in the world. In addition, while education has been reforming in modern China, the curriculum concept, curriculum objectives, curriculum content, and curriculum evaluation are incompatible with society's development. Moreover, there is a shortage of educational resources, and the supply of education does not meet the high demand for primary music education in this country. Apart from failing to meet the needs of most education consumers in terms of quantity, there is also a large gap in terms of variety and quality. Consequently, the Chinese education sector at that time became convinced that contemporary high-quality educational resources could be introduced from abroad, and that advanced foreign concepts, modes, and mechanisms of operating schools would influence and drive education reform in China. Due to strong market demand and supply in China and France, there is a great deal of potential for educational exchanges. Despite these previous studies have not been very comprehensive when it comes to Sino-French music education exchanges. In the pre-preparation stage of this paper, the authors reviewed many archival materials and research results on music education in Chinese and French primary schools and concluded that academic research has been fruitful in comparing music education between China, Japan, and the United States, but there has been little research on the comparative education of music between China and France. A large number of French materials have not yet been utilized, and the majority of research focuses on Chinese and French higher education, on the comparison of music performance methods, and very little research has been conducted on the subject of primary school music education curricula, which have been limited to comparing the nationally published curriculum standards to the educator's reality. A comparative study is essential to shed light on the varied viewpoints, better understand differences in intensity, and encounter similarities between subjects (Kasanko et al., 2006). It enhances thought, cultivates culture and enlightens choice. Combining variables in a comparative study helps find patterns. Accordingly, academic and business communities can derive creative conclusions leading to breakthroughs across numerous fields.

China has historically viewed the European countries as a whole, so studies comparing primary music education between China and France are often included in comparisons of primary music education between China and Europe. The research on the comparison of Chinese and French primary school music education is fragmented, not yet in-depth, and not systematic, as in contrast to China and the United States or China and Japan, has already had several monographs on the history of educational exchanges, there has not been a comparison between Chinese and French music education curricula to date. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct systematic research and analysis of the similarities and differences between the primary music curriculums of French and Chinese countries in the recent past. To understand the differences between Chinese and French primary school music education curricula from a variety of perspectives, a comparative study of Chinese and French primary school music education curricula is necessary. In order to provide inspiration and suggestions for the reform of Chinese primary school music education curricula, we have to understand the rationality and characteristics of French primary school music education curricula. In addition, Different curricula reflect the diversity and adaptability of educational systems, which are tailored to peculiar regional, cultural and social needs. To educators, policymakers, and students alike, these distinctions are significant in helping to globalize our view of education (Young, 2012). This allows for incorporating various teaching methods, different types of content, and cultural subtleties. It encourages incline-liness and relevance. Acknowledging and valuing these differences increases the effectiveness of education, helping learners understand and adjust to a rapidly globalizing world

while laying the foundations for a flexible workforce ready in all respects.

Research Questions

(1) What is the philosophy, objectives, content, and evaluation of the current primary music education curriculum followed in China and France?

(2) What are the current differences between China and France in terms of philosophy, objectives, content, and evaluation of music education curriculum?

(3) Through comparison, is it possible for China to improve its music education curriculum by applying some of the philosophies, objectives, contents, and evaluation of the contemporary French primary music education curriculum?

Research Objectives

(1) To compare the current situation of the music education curriculum of primary schools in France and China.

(2) To promote the reform of the Chinese primary school music education curriculum.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature chapter details comparative studies of music education from China to France. These diverse dimensions include curriculum standards, teaching methods and cultural contexts. This chapter offers a comprehensive look at elementary school music education, ranging from international analyses to localized comparisons. These results highlight the value of these studies, which show parallels and differences and provide crucial insights for enhancing music curriculum effectiveness in both countries.

However, despite the lack of completed research methods on music education guidelines in elementary, a variety of schools in France and China, this topic is still the subject of much investigation, including but not limited to the following: For starters, while looking at international comparisons, The present Chinese and English elementary school music curricula standards were chosen as the subject of the study, as well as a comparison study technique was used along with literature research and discourse analysis to compare and analyze the two sets of curriculum standards. In addition, Jin (2022) explore China's 2011 version of "Compulsory Education Music Curriculum Standards" to the 2014 version of the United Kingdom's "Music Curriculum Standards for Primary and Secondary Schools."

In terms of comparative research between regions, Zhao (2017) primarily four music curriculum requirements were contrasted. These included The 9 Coordinated Humanities and Arts Program Outline for Government Primary and Secondary Schools in Taiwan (1997 edition), The Musical Education Standards for Comprehensive Mandatory Learning in Mainland China (2011 edition), and the Music Education Guide. From the vantage point of the content, the Full-Time Compulsory Education Standard for Music in Mainland China (2011 edition) was analyzed (1999 edition). In addition, Daquino (2017) categorized the music curriculum standards of these three sites, analyzed whether or not the curriculum standards included music ontology, and confirmed that ontology regression was a prerequisite. This study's main goal is to evaluate, contrast, and compare the methods used in music instruction in elementary schools in a variety of locales.

With regard to the Chinese comparative studies that have been done, Garvis, Barton, & Hartwig (2017) chose the Artwork Education Standards for Mandatory Learning and the Curricular Standards for Mandatory Instruction for Music (2011 edition) to investigate the similarities and differences between the two types of courses. These curriculum standards were chosen because they are the most recent editions of their respective standards. In addition to this, Yang and Welch (2022) analyzed the disparities in the curricular requirements for music in the compulsory education editions released in the years 2001 and 2011 from the points of view of the curriculum objectives and the curriculum content. In addition to this, he offered his thoughts on the debate that surrounded the revision of the curricular standards in 2011. Additionally, Ho (2014) investigated the music curriculum syllabus across the entirety of modern China's history. He compared the teaching of music in the classroom prior to the implementation of music curricular guidelines and the instruction of music in the classroom after the application of music education standards. In addition to this, Meng & Liu (2023) provided analysis and recommendations for appropriate solutions to the challenges that developed during the procedure for creating music education requirements in remote locations. It should not come as a surprise that the primary emphasis of these studies is a study into the standards for a musical education that is placed in primary schools in China.

Last but not least, according to the comparison between France and China, Lau et al. (2018) compared teaching in terms of teaching objectives, textbook selection, and the teaching process. This comparison was made from the perspective of teaching objectives. VerSteege (2022) analyzed the utilization of music in French public kindergartens from three different angles: musical endeavors, the perceptions of the instructors, and the self-efficacy of the kindergarten teachers. These viewpoints are derived from research conducted in French.

A significant amount of progress has been made as a result of the examination of the parallels and divergences that exist between the music curriculum taught in elementary schools in China and those taught in other countries. Local comparison research has been done between China and the United States of America, Britain, and Japan. There have also been studies done between Japan and China. In opposition to that, international comparison studies have been conducted among China, Japan, Britain, and the United States. On the other hand, comparison studies have been done between Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao, and other regions of mainland China. Comparison studies comparing several iterations of China's music curriculum standards have also been conducted, and between China and France when it comes to teaching preferred methods. Research is currently being conducted in France on the subject of incorporating art classes into primary school curricula as well as the teaching of music to young people. This research is also being conducted in the United Kingdom. It is abundantly clear that although there is a wealth of research the quality of the music curriculum in China and France has not been particularly compared in studies on elementary school music education in China and overseas. This is despite the fact that primary school music education is considered a priority in both countries. Despite the fact that both countries have a long tradition of teaching young people about music, this is the case. As a consequence of this, It offers a fruitful possibility for this inquiry's topic matter selection.

A multifaceted theoretical framework is used to qualitatively analyse music education curricula in Chinese and French primary schools. The study is based on cultural studies, educational sociology and curriculum development theories to offer a cross-cultural look at music education's historical development and present situation. By integrating these various theoretical threads, the research attempts to explain everything that plays into music curriculum development in both countries.

The study relies on many personal and official documents, but we must point out that existing research has gaps or limitations that must be explicitly identified. With an explicit statement of potential deficiencies, the study may be able to meet unanticipated challenges or improve existing theories. A more precise delineation of the research gaps could enhance this study's theoretical robustness and provide a multifaceted perspective on what many would call an exceedingly complex topic--the comparative analysis of music education curricula.

METHODOLOGY

The research will use the qualitative research method which involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. It can gather in-depth insights into a problem or generate new ideas for research. Paillé and Mucchielli (2021) define qualitative research as follows. To collect these qualitative data (i.e., testimonies, field notes), the tools and methods used are set up so that, on the one hand, they can analyze them qualitatively--not in terms of percentages or statistics but rather by extracting meaning from data points such as eyewitness reports. More fundamentally, this research is also said to be qual.

The research uses personal and official documents as source materials. Documents include newspapers, maps, government statistical publications, photographs, paintings, gramophone records, tapes, and computer files. In this study, the author will use the library and the Internet, access large academic databases, search for relevant research results in China and France, and use various Chinese and foreign language literature carriers to collect the history, current situation, and problems of the development of music education curricula in primary schools in China and France, and then read, analyses, and integrates these materials. First-hand information is used as far as possible in the research process to ensure the reliability of the data, respect history as far as possible, and attempt to express one's views and make reasonable suggestions based on a comprehensive, objective, and impartial reproduction of previous research.

Also, the author chose a semi-structured interview out of several possible types. The overall purpose of using semi-structured interviews for data collection is to gather information from key informants who have personal experiences, attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs related to the topic of interest. Researchers can use semi-structured interviews to collect new, exploratory data related to a research topic, triangulate other data sources or validate findings through member checking. (Lincoln, Guba, & Pilotta, 1985). This study carried interview questions that were open-ended, so I asked them open-ended questions. In my guide, I have divided it into five

sections or themes.

The transcription of the interviews has been done as faithfully as possible to what the teachers have said. Some rules had to be established, however, to facilitate the reading of the interviews. To facilitate the analysis of my interviews, I printed them out, highlighting the participants' answers with different colors. Throughout the participants' statements, the same colors always referred to the same theme. Thematic analysis emphasizes the importance of identifying, examining, and recording themes or patterns in the data (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). Then chose thematic analysis as my method of analysis. In research from Kiger & Varpio (2020). Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns(themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data in rich detail. However, frequently it goes further than this and interprets various aspects of the research topic.

In comparing music curricula in Chinese and French primary schools, nothing is more important than ethics. The research process must be undertaken with respect for cultural differences and sensitivity to local contexts. The needs of the participants, schools, educators and, in particular, students must be respected. Their protection rights should also be protected as they are provided with an opportunity for informed consent. Researchers must strictly maintain transparency in data collection, analysis and reporting without introducing bias or misrepresentation. In addition, respecting and maintaining intellectual property rights-especially in cross-cultural research--is particularly important.

Moreover, Several constraints may limit the scope and generalizability of the study. Educational lin, linguistic, and cultural differences create variables that make arriving at an utterly equal yardstick impossible. The limited time involved in the study and finite resources mean that the the analysis may need to reach adequate depth or include many schools. However, the changing nature of educational policy and curriculum revision in China and France may limit things to a specific period. Last, because access to comprehensive and up-to-date information may be hampered by bureaucratic obstacles or the limitations of available data (especially for cross-comparisons), findings are only sometimes definitive. These limitations must be transparently acknowledged and addressed by researchers to improve the study's credibility and relevance.

In this study, making data reliable required adopting a consistent and standardized approach to collecting information on music curricula from Chinese primary and French elementary schools. Through reliable data, the study can be replicated. It would have the same result at different times and under various circumstances. In the context of this study, data validity necessarily means that the information collected reflects all complexity related to music education in both cultural settings. Only valid data guarantees that the study measures what it purports to look at matches research objectives and accurately depicts the music curriculum in Chinese and French primary schools.

RESULTS

Comparative Analysis of Curriculum Objectives

After completing the survey and analysis of the current situation of the curriculum objectives of music education in primary schools in France and China, this sub-section compares the curriculum objectives of music education in primary schools in France and China, which have both similarities and differences.

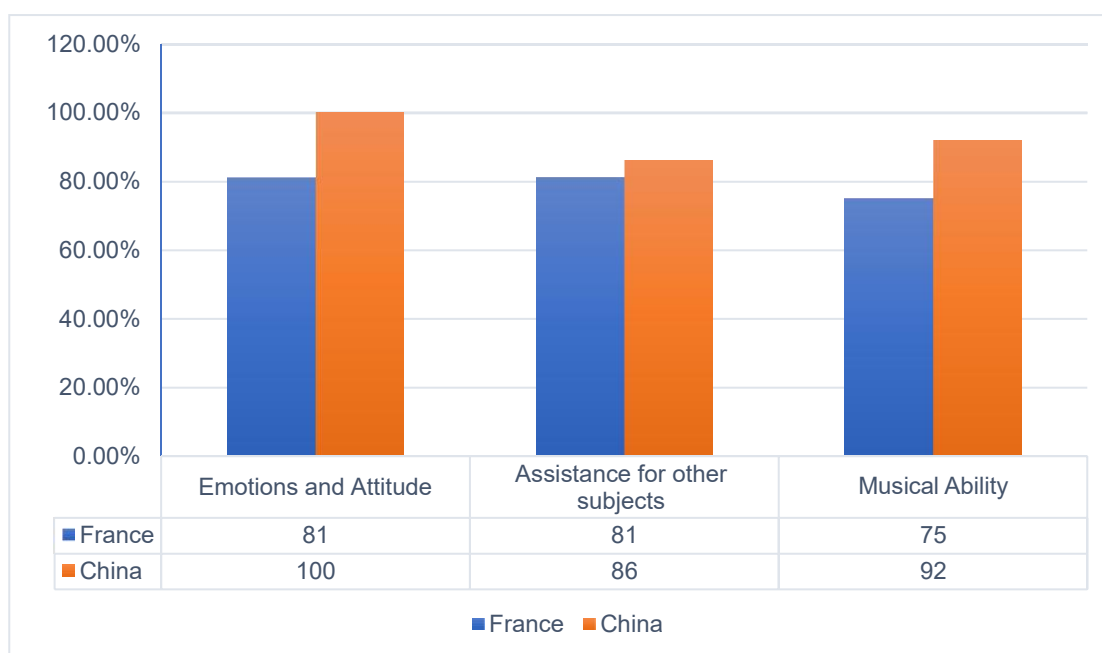


Figure 1. Percentage of the Direction of Primary School Music Curriculum Objectives in France and China.

Figure 1 illustrates the ratios of 100:81, 92:75, and 86:81 for emotions and attitudes, musical ability, and assistance for other subjects about curriculum objectives in China and France, respectively. These ratios indicate the relative importance attached to these primary school curriculum objectives in these two countries. Nevertheless, the percentages differ, with China placing greater emphasis on emotions and attitudes, while France is more evenly divided between the three target directions. The authors will compare the curricular objectives of the two countries separately in the following sections.

The author found out from the interviews that the objectives of the Chinese primary music education curriculum are to 'cultivate students' interest in music through teaching and various live music practice activities, and to cultivate the ability to feel and appreciate music as well as to express and create'. As part of the French primary music education curriculum, students are encouraged to express themselves and learn to appreciate music. Music education curricula in France and China are designed to develop students' aesthetic abilities, enabling them to differentiate between truth, goodness, and beauty through a comprehensive study of the music curriculum, as well as making a theoretical distinction between the pursuit of knowledge, the cultivation of morality, and the appreciation of aesthetics.

Both France and China place great emphasis on the importance of music education in developing students' foundational personalities for the world of tomorrow. Hadzigeorgiou & Hadzigeorgiou (2016), explains that aesthetics, art, is a creative way for humans to grasp the world in their imaginations and is significantly different from the more familiar cognitive and practical aspects of education.

To understand the utilitarian nature of aesthetics, Kant's aesthetics must be considered. He proposes "the first opportunity for appreciative judgment" - "beauty is a pleasant object free from all interest" - as the key to the formal birth of traditional aesthetics in his *Critique of Judgment* (Zuckert, 2019). Chen (2018) states: "Pleasure is that which makes a man happy; beauty is that which merely satisfies him; goodness is that which he cherishes and approves, that is, in which he affirms an objective value. Of these three kinds of pleasure, only the pleasure of the appreciation of beauty is the only disinterested and free pleasure; for there is neither a sense of interest on the part of the faculties nor a sense of interest on the part of the reason to compel us to approve." Thus, the emphasis on the non-utilitarian nature of aesthetic activity in aesthetics is no longer aesthetic activity per se, nor is it merely a transcendental aesthetic interest, but is already an aesthetic privilege, a theoretical discourse.

Nearly equal proportions of interviewees in both countries mentioned a desire to develop students' musical skills as a curriculum objective. As an important vehicle for implementing aesthetic education in both countries, singing education in primary schools plays a crucial role in developing students' aesthetic skills, creative ability, and expressiveness. A good piece of music not only requires a beautiful melody and a moving singing voice, but also the singer must present and express the work in vivid expressions, coordinated movements, and a moving voice, based on a deep appreciation of the emotions of the musical work, to move others with their voice and emotions.

According to the interviewers in both countries, the primary purpose of singing training at the primary school level is to enhance the aesthetic function of music as perceived by students and to help them sing with feeling. Students in primary and secondary schools benefit from singing as part of their development of a sound aesthetic psyche. A sound aesthetic psyche will play a very important role in one's growth, and it is also the most effective way to express the beauty of music, so while singing and appreciating beautiful and noble music, students are subconsciously influenced and infected by musical images, which will have a beneficial effect on their sentiments and character mind. Producing, singing, and appreciating songs is a mental activity that expresses emotions through the spirit. As Swanger (1983) states, singing plays an important role in the development of good mental and aesthetic values in students.

Both countries emphasize the importance of improving the intellectual development of their students as part of the overall curriculum objective. Among the objectives of Chinese music, the curriculum is to provide students with not only a basic understanding of basic musical knowledge but also the opportunity to learn other skills and abilities through the study of music. As stated in the French Primary Music Curriculum Objectives, students will be able to complete projects within and between disciplines through interdisciplinary practical teaching or artistic and cultural education programs once they have learned to use a variety of resources. Both France and China place a great deal of emphasis on the intellectual development of their students.

However, in both countries, interviewees mentioned "patriotism" as one of their objectives. In China, patriotic education is primarily concerned with teaching students to respect the national flag and emblem and to sing the national anthem, while in France, it focuses on learning about local culture through music. The number of people who mention "patriotism" and its focus is completely different, with 81% of people in France mentioning this goal and only 50% in China. As far as the emphasis is concerned, France places more emphasis on the "transmission of local culture", whereas China places a greater emphasis on the popularization of patriotic songs.

In terms of the 'musical ability' curriculum objectives, China proposes a mastery of singing, rhythm, melody, tonality, and instrumental skills as well as the development of musical skills. However, the French curriculum aims to teach students how to sing, rhythm, and melody as applied to singing without addressing the development of instrumental skills. The difference between the two countries in terms of the development of musical skills lies in the fact that the curriculum objectives for primary music education in China are more specialized. A student's requirements include mastery of music theory, including key, rising, and falling notation, as well as proficiency in playing musical instruments. As far as musical knowledge was concerned, the French interviewers did not require much specialist knowledge on the part of the students. They only wanted their students to be involved in the interview process. It appears that the Chinese interviewers were more interested in the professional aspects of music education, while the French interviewers were more interested in the general aspects of music education. According to the objectives of the 'assistance for other subjects' curriculum, there are three significant differences between the French and Chinese primary school curricula. The 'unpacking for other subjects' objective is unique to China, and the 'integration with language' objective is unique to the French curriculum.

Comparative Analysis of Curriculum Contents

In both countries, singing is an important part of the music curriculum and is considered a valuable form of artistic expression. Both countries see singing as the foundation for the full range of musical learning, an activity that is directly linked to emotion and communicates with the mind. As Demorest, Nichols and Pfordresher (2017) state Singing is a foundational musical skill and one of the most natural ways for children to engage in making music and central to the development of musicianship. Likewise, the interviewers agreed that the human voice is the most universal, economical, and common instrument among all human beings. It is independent of objective factors such as economic conditions or geography, as well as subjective factors such as cultural education and inner cultivation. It is possible to sing and express one's feelings and emotions as long as one has emotions and feelings. Additionally, the human voice is one of the most beautiful and natural instruments in the world. If the singing voice is used as a tool, the organic combination of words and notes can be used to express people's inner feelings. As far as other musical activities are concerned, they require similar material conditions. For example, instrumental teaching requires musical instruments; appreciation teaching requires sound equipment; singing requires only one accompanying instrument, such as a flute, or a harmonica can be taught (Bai & Wu, 2024).

Rhythmic training begins at the primary level and continues throughout the primary education process in both France and China. According to both countries, rhythm is an essential element of music that children are likely to be interested in and feel. During the period when the baby is still within the mother's body, the baby experiences the regular beating of the mother's heart, which stimulates the baby to experience stability and a sense of rhythm. The beating of the mother's heart then imparts the most primitive rhythmic instincts, as the Swiss music educator Dalcroze put it, "Man is invariably endowed with an innate rhythmic instinct." (Cai & Yang, 1999). It is widely recognized by educators in both countries that a holistic listening programme can assist

students in developing their skills in intercultural communication. The use of music as a medium of cultural exchange between countries has become increasingly important in the context of globalisation. Through exposure to music from different countries and nationalities, students can better understand the values and lifestyles of other cultures, thus enhancing their intercultural communication skills. In both China and France, song singing is a valuable skill that is included in the primary school music curriculum. Despite this, singing songs that have been written by others does not satisfy children's need to express themselves and fulfil their own needs. Therefore, in this context, encouraging children in both countries to compose songs can help them to better understand and experience the art of music, as well as enhance their overall qualities of independent exploration, freedom of expression and independent thinking in the field of music.

Although the proportion of primary school music education curriculum content in China and France is very similar, as shown in **Figure 2** below, China has very little content about creativity in the curriculum. In addition, although the proportion is similar, the specific interior implementation is also different. This reflects the differences in music education philosophies and goals between the two countries. Chinese music education focuses more on the imparting of knowledge and skill training, while French music education places more emphasis on students' creativity and expression.

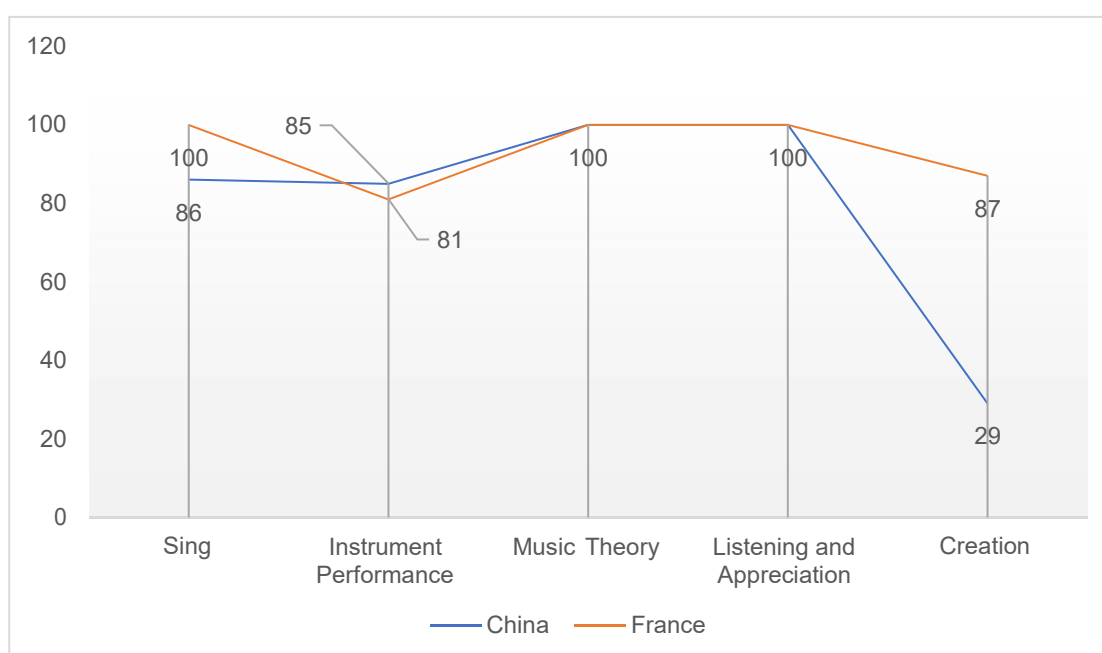


Figure 2. Comparison of the Content of Music Education Curriculum in France and China

However, French primary music education emphasizes the development of the individual pupil and the development of musical interests. Teachers select songs based on the preferences and interests of their students to stimulate their enthusiasm and participation. A personalized approach to teaching encourages pupils to develop a love of music and promotes their ability to learn and create independently.

A further component of French music education is the selection of songs appropriate to different festivals and celebrations as well as paying attention to the students' personal preferences. With the help of musical expressions, this pedagogical approach aims to enhance students' knowledge and understanding of French cultural traditions and to provide them with a better understanding of French cultural traditions. Music educators can provide students with an immersive learning environment by selecting songs that relate to specific festivals and celebrations and providing them with a musical immersion into the French cultural scene. Students are not only strengthened in their identification with French culture but also become more aware of the strong connection between music and culture through this approach.

Comparative Analysis of Curriculum Evaluation

Both China and France combine formative and summative evaluations in their primary music education curriculum to evaluate students' musical learning and performance.

During summative evaluations, students are assessed on what they know, what they can do, and what they can express (Brewer & McEwan, 2010). At the end of the music curriculum, summative evaluation summarizes

and assesses students' musical achievements and levels. As a result of music instruction, teachers summarize and rate students' musical achievements and skill levels to determine whether the learning of students was effective and whether the instruction was of high quality. Summative evaluations are designed to measure the progress of students in their musical education. This type of evaluation allows students to understand their musical standards and shortcomings and also promotes reflection and improvement in their learning. In addition to guiding students' future development, summative evaluation can also provide strong support for their choice of music major or participation in music competitions.

In both China and France, primary music education places a great deal of emphasis on the development and evaluation of performance skills. Performance skills are an essential objective and evaluation component of music education in both countries. In addition to evaluating students' musical learning and performance, performance ability is also an important evaluation indicator.

Students are usually evaluated according to their performance abilities by their teachers in the music education curriculum in a variety of ways, such as by asking them to perform in small groups and individually to evaluate their abilities in terms of musical skills, expressiveness, and musical feeling. As a member of a group performance, students must maintain harmony with other group members regarding volume balance and vocal harmony. During the ensemble, the teacher will observe students' ability to collaborate, their musical ability, and their understanding of the overall musical effect. Using this type of evaluation, students can develop their teamwork and collective performance skills.

Although the content of the evaluation in both France and China is considered in terms of musical skills and the overall quality of the students, there are clear differences between the two countries. However, there is a clear difference in emphasis between the two countries, as shown in **Figure 3**.

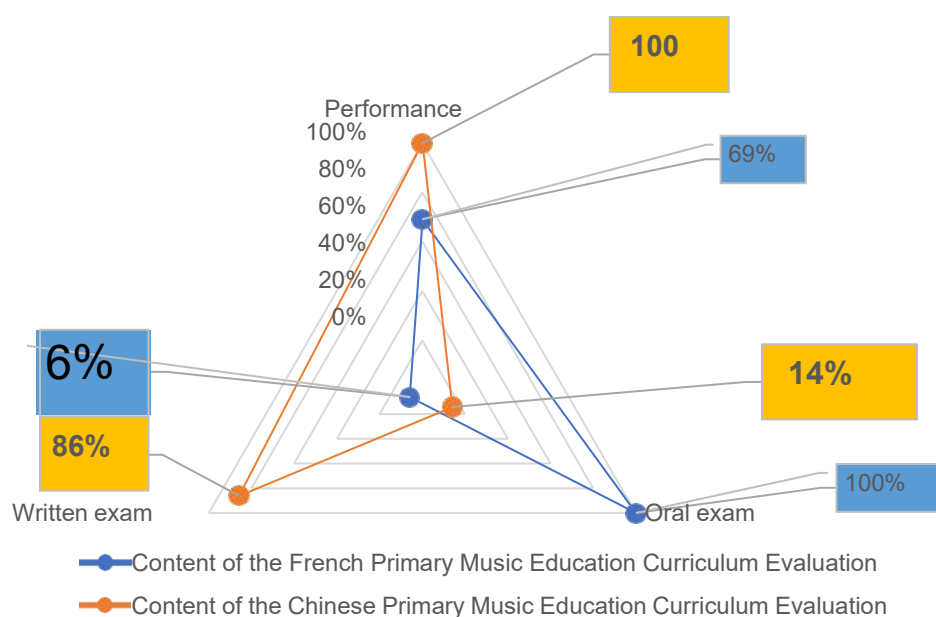


Figure 3. Comparison of the Evaluation Content of Music Education Curriculum in France and China

The Chinese primary music education curriculum, as shown in the diagram, emphasizes the evaluation of student's knowledge and skills through objective assessment methods such as written tests and performances. To demonstrate their ability to recognize a simple pentatonic score and to describe in simple terms what they hear, students are required to take a written exam. Additionally, students must demonstrate their ability to play simple percussion in rhythmic patterns by performing a performance. Music understanding and feeling are relatively little considered in these evaluation criteria and methods, focusing primarily on students' mastery of music knowledge and skills.

On the other hand, the French primary music education curriculum emphasizes creativity and expression as evaluation criteria, using subjective evaluation methods such as observation, recording, and interviewing. Students are required, for instance, to create their own sound, sing, play, or compose to express their imagination of a particular theme or situation. Additionally, students must demonstrate the ability to collaborate with others in musical activities and comment on the performance of others. Rather than focusing on the extent to which

students have acquired musical knowledge and skills, these criteria and methods emphasize students' creativity and expressiveness.

French primary music curriculum encourages students to develop and demonstrate their creativity, as well as to express their understanding and feelings about music through this approach to evaluation. It is through this subjective approach to evaluation that students are stimulated to express their musical style and to think independently. A Chinese primary music education curriculum, on the other hand, emphasizes the acquisition of accurate musical knowledge and skills, with a specific focus on developing students' musical fundamentals and skills. Both methods of evaluation have their focuses, but together they contribute to the overall development of students in the field of music.

Comparative Analysis of Curriculum Philosophy

the authors conducted a content analysis of the interview data from the Chinese interviewees and examined the philosophical underpinnings of China's elementary school music education curriculum in terms of curriculum objectives, curriculum content, and curriculum evaluation. Using comparative analysis, the authors determined that the purpose, content, and evaluation of the Chinese primary school music education curriculum reflect a utilitarian aestheticist trend combining aesthetic and utilitarian ideas. It is clear from the objectives of the Chinese primary music education curriculum that music education aims to cultivate a student's aesthetic ability and emotional literacy so that he or she can appreciate, comprehend, and create beautiful music. Conversely, the objectives, contents, and evaluation of the Chinese primary school music education curriculum bear the imprint of utilitarianism.

Utilitarianism is a philosophy of education that advocates preparing students for the needs and functions of society through education. In education, utilitarianism is concerned with ensuring that as many people as possible are satisfied. In addition, it promotes an education that will assist students in leading successful lives and contribute to society's overall well-being (University of Notre Dame, n.d.). The utilitarian viewpoint believes that education should be linked to the real needs of society and should develop practical skills and knowledge, as well as a sense of responsibility and cooperation. As utilitarians, we also value the role of education in achieving social equity and mobility. We believe that education can give everyone equal opportunities and allow them to achieve status and rewards according to their abilities. Utilitarian aesthetics strives to achieve a balance and compromise between aestheticism and utilitarianism. It is suggested by Philpott and Plummeridge (2001) that utilitarian aesthetics recognizes the necessity of acquiring skills to learn music, but that the ultimate aim is to develop a pupil's understanding and experience of the beauty of music. Utilitarian aestheticism is characterized by an understanding of beauty as a tool with practical applications and useful properties. The idea is that artworks should serve the needs of society and satisfy the practical goals and interests of people. In utilitarian aesthetics, beauty is viewed as a resource that can be used and evaluated, and its value and value judgment are based upon its contribution to social welfare. Dell'Asta (2017) argues that utilitarian aestheticism emphasizes artwork's practical and utilitarian value. Specifically, it argues that art should meet people's needs and provide practical benefits such as education, social reform, or emotional healing. It is the belief of utilitarian aestheticians that art should be evaluated based on its practical and social contributions. Following this, the authors discuss the implications of utilitarian aestheticism for the objectives, content, and evaluation of the music education curriculum in Chinese primary schools.

Based on the content analysis of the interview data from the French interviewee. The authors concluded from a comparative analysis that the French primary school music curriculum exhibits both a tendency to practice and aesthetics, i.e. practical aesthetics. On the one hand, it emphasizes action and values the process, advocating students should participate in music learning through hands-on performances, changing the passive appreciation-based music learning style, and believing that music learning lies in practice and doing; however, it emphasizes aesthetic education, emphasizing the aesthetic value and artistic merit of music. Through this educational approach, students will be encouraged to develop their aesthetic ability and creativity, so that they will be able to feel, create, and express beauty in music.

Music educators who follow the practical philosophy believe that the nature of music determines the nature of music education. Recognizing the nature of music is therefore essential to understanding practical philosophy. David Elliott, an exponent of practicalism, proposes his conception after sorting through the foundations of common musical discourses such as music as organized sound, music as humanly organized musical sounds and their resting elaborate patterns, music as lying in the experience of listening, and the essence and value of music as aesthetic: music is the overt and implicit construction of the primary (but not necessarily the only) value of immersion, self-growth, and self-knowledge of self-awareness. Elliott's conception of music is based on the practical, cultural, and non-work-based nature of music (Koopman, 1998).

An important component of practical aesthetics is the importance of the individual's aesthetic experience and participation in artistic creation. Essentially, it emphasizes the intrinsic value of beauty, emotional experience, and individual artistic development, as well as the autonomy and independence of art. It is the philosophy of practical aesthetics that art is not only an object to be appreciated but also a form of positive behaviour and practice. The process of participating in art creation and personally experiencing it can help individuals gain a deeper understanding of the nature of art as well as cultivate aesthetic emotion and aesthetic ability. According to Pelowski et al. (2016) in *Art as Experience*, a practical aesthetic perspective emphasizes the importance of the experience of art. In his view, art is a process of interaction with a work through which the individual receives a synthesis of emotions, feelings and reflections as a result of the interaction. He emphasized that through active participation in the arts, individuals can gain a deeper level of understanding and experience and are better able to understand themselves and the world around them. Further, Dewey argues that artistic experience is a process of self-realization and self-expression that can lead individuals to discover their creative potential. Practical aesthetics emphasizes the importance of the individual's aesthetic experience and participation in artistic creation, focusing on beauty's intrinsic value, emotional experience, and personal artistic growth, as well as the autonomy and independence of art.

The authors argue that practical philosophy is based on an anthropological view of music as a diversity of human practices. This practice is based on the perspective of the philosophy of practicalism that a music education curriculum should not merely be an educational means of transmitting musical knowledge and skills, but rather an educational mechanism that encourages students to practice music and become musically and culturally literate. The philosophy of practicalism is primarily reflected in the following aspects of the music education curriculum: objectives, contents, and evaluation.

Moreover, due to the small size and uncertain selection criteria used in recruiting music teachers, this study needs help making generalizable findings beyond China and France. The cultural and language barriers may make it difficult to interpret the educators' responses accurately while limiting available curricular materials can be a constraint. The Subjective factors in the comparative analysis increase the risk of researcher bias, and some aspects of music education systems may be missed. Differences in broader education systems, resource constraints, and the failure to take technology integration directly into account further shape these limitations. Such challenges indicate the need for careful interpretation and point out places where future research can be improved.

DISCUSSION

The author proposes "one reduction and one increase" for the future development of China's primary music education curriculum philosophy. The first is to reduce utilitarianism and technologization, to solve the problems of utilitarianism, technological trends and neglect of aesthetic values currently facing primary music education in China, as well as remove the over-emphasis on performance and skills, thereby cultivating students' emotional resonance and aesthetic experience of music. It is at this point that the focus of the reform is to move away from the traditional, overly results-oriented model of education and place a greater emphasis on the development of the individual and their holistic growth as individuals. In music education, this means that instead of overemphasizing technical proficiency and mastery of theoretical knowledge, the emphasis is on cultivating students' musical appreciation, inspiring their love of music, and promoting their emotional development and social adaptability through music education. As a result of this shift, a utilitarian philosophy of education that emphasizes achievement has been replaced by a student-centred philosophy. This study qualitatively analyzes the many personal and official documents.

Increasing the practicality is the next step. This measure focuses on the adoption of a more hands-on and experiential approach to teaching that allows students to gain knowledge and experience through actual musical activities. In this approach, students are encouraged to engage in active participation and practice, thereby experiencing and understanding music through playing, composing, and performing. In addition to helping students acquire practical musical skills, this approach fosters creative thinking, teamwork, and self-expression as well. There has been a shift in education from a knowledge-based approach to a competency-based approach.

For example, the author proposes that "cultural heritage" should be a curriculum objective. To fully explore the penetration of traditional Chinese festivals and cultural education in the current primary school music curriculum, the author selects or creates traditional Chinese festivals and music content that meets the cognitive level of primary school students and tries to explore a variety of innovative forms of guiding contemporary primary school students to learn and understand traditional festivals and culture through music, to realize the curricular objective of Chinese cultural inheritance. In the following section, the author will take the Chinese

Spring Festival as an example and elaborate more concretely on how the curriculum content should be developed under the curriculum objective of "cultural inheritance" in the light of the curriculum content.

This festival marks the end of the old calendar year and the beginning of the new calendar year and is an important traditional festival of the Chinese nation. It is the traditional festival with the greatest blessings and celebrations of the year, and it is the longest traditional festival of the year. In modern times, the Spring Festival has also been associated with family reunions, leisure, and relaxation. The author suggests that teachers can adapt to the festive environment of the upcoming Spring Festival by teaching the children the song "Long Dong Qiang" to better achieve the curriculum objective of "cultural inheritance."

The image shows a musical score for the song "Long Dong Qiang". At the top, the title "龙咚锵" is written in large, stylized red Chinese characters. Below it, the English title "Long Dong Qiang" is written. The composer's name "刘明将 词曲" (Liu Mingjiang Lyrics and Music) is on the right. The key signature is "1=F" and the time signature is "2/4". The tempo/mood is "热烈地" (Allegretto). The score is written on a single staff with notes and rests. The lyrics are in Chinese and English. The Chinese lyrics are: "过新年呀 龙咚龙咚 锵! 多快乐呀 龙咚龙咚 锵! 龙咚龙咚 锵! 龙咚龙咚 锵! 龙咚 锵! 锵! 锵!". The English lyrics are: "Celebrate the New Year, Long Dong Long Dong Qiang! How happy Long Dong Long Dong Qiang! Long Dong Qiang! Long Dong Qiang! Long Dong Qiang! Long Dong Qiang!". The score ends with a double bar line.

Figure 4. Score for "Long Dong Qiang"

In the song "Long Dong Qiang" (Figure 4), traditional Chinese folk customs are incorporated into the music. In the song, the rhythm of the gongs and drums is combined with the tones of the lyrics through rhythmic repetition, melodic progression, and repetition, and conveys the lively atmosphere of New Year's Day when people are banging on the gongs and beating the drums (Cui & Chen, 2023). The author suggests that teachers should teach "Long Dong Qiang" step by step, so that students may begin by listening to the sound of the drums and cymbals, get to know the drums and cymbals, and then use the snare drums and cymbals to learn the basic rhythm of the song, "Long dong, Long dong qiang". It is a good preparation for learning the song. From the understanding of the rhythm, the students gradually become familiar with the lyrics, and then naturally add the lyrics to the melody of the song, so the learning of the song proceeds very smoothly and naturally.

The results provide the basis for policy-making to influence curriculum organizations of instruction as well as cross-cultural exchange in music education. Recognizing the possibility of biases in data collection and interpretation is essential. Although cultural and linguistic nuances add colour to the study, these inevitably introduce a few limitations that affect its depth and breadth.

In addition, knowing the cultural and historical surroundings in which music education exists in China and France is indispensable to interpreting research findings correctly. It is needed for a complete understanding of complexity. Future research topics should focus on longitudinal trends, regional variations, and the effects of different types of educational policy on music curriculum development in primary schools.

LIMITATIONS

This study has notable limitations. Firstly, it overgeneralizes. Music education systems on both sides of the

ocean are far from monolithic; variations might be found depending on location or school administration. Moreover, more and more reliable data is needed to improve the investigation. For example, analyzing curricular documents and teaching materials may be challenging. Secondly, the analysis itself is a process of subjective judgment and opens up possibilities for researcher bias. Moreover, the study must explicitly address any limitations in conducting a comparative analysis and relying on interviews and a literature review.

CONCLUSION

This study used a qualitative research method to examine contemporary primary school music curricula in China and France with face-to-face semi-structured interviews with educators on either side of the globe. The interviews yielded genuine information on both countries' music education philosophy, objectives, content and evaluation methods. This step-by-step comparative approach allowed the interview data to be gathered, summarized and cross-compared. It indicates cultural differences that are conditioned by politics, culture and economics as well. These distinctions notwithstanding, the study also shows that these differences offer opportunities for France and China to exchange learning about primary school music education. Based on interviews, this methodology was concrete evidence for the study's conclusions and led to a detailed examination of the curricular landscape. Such implications suggest an understanding of cross-cultural education, but there are still limitations regarding cultural detail or potential bias in introducing comparison. The historical and cultural background helped shape the study's story, pointing out that a model for educational practice should not be seen in isolation. With this study paving the way for cross-cultural exchange in educational circles, future studies should focus on regional differences and finer comparative methods. They must also explore how primary school music education is changing with time.

IMPLICATIONS

This study is of great importance, revealing the cultural and conceptual differences in music education curricula between China and France. Such a comparison not only strips away these differences but may also serve as a springboard for intercultural cooperation and exchange, particularly in music education. Opening up pathways to examine the complexities of formulating curricula for music education worldwide, it offers a bridge between successful aspects of Chinese and French educational systems. But while the chapter raises some interesting questions, it needs to make concrete recommendations about these matters. Improving these points would add to the study's value for the field.

FUTURE DIRECTION

Adding more nations to this study can expand its scope and offer a better international comparison of what musical education tenets are taught in primary schools worldwide. What technology? In future studies, we must consider specific suggestions for investigating the effects of information on music education curricula, testing its actual impact on student learning and interest in their subject. In comparing primary school music education programs in China and France, it's interesting to examine how student outcomes- musical ability and creativity- are measured. The study can provide an international standard for elementary school music education, thus promoting best practices throughout the world. In addition, the long-term consequences of music instruction--the students' musical development and its relationship to their overall welfare and viability in future career choices deserve continued study. The only way to determine the direction of future research in this field is by bridging curriculum gaps and reflecting on technology's evolving role.

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