

Philosophical Approaches to Integrating Cultural Concepts in Piano Teaching Amidst Globalization

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Abstract: The study investigated piano teachers' and students' attitudes, experiences, and perceptions regarding cultural integration in piano lessons. Data was collected through a standardized survey, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations to directly observe how cultural concepts were being implemented in piano lessons. Increased student interest and motivation topped the list of perceived benefits, followed by a deeper understanding and appreciation for music from diverse cultures. However, agreement lessened for the benefits related to enhanced cultural awareness and critical thinking skills. Several approaches were identified, including introducing music from diverse cultures through repertoire selection, discussing the historical and cultural context of musical pieces, incorporating culturally relevant performance techniques, encouraging students to explore music from different cultures independently, and inviting guest musicians from various backgrounds for workshops or demonstrations. Challenges included difficulty locating appropriate resources, integrating cultural concepts seamlessly into lesson plans while maintaining core piano skill development, limited time within lessons, and teachers feeling restricted by their own knowledge of diverse cultures. This study highlights the potential benefits of integrating cultural concepts into piano lessons for both teachers and students.

Keywords: Piano, Music appreciation, Cultural awareness

1. INTRODUCTION

Musical engagement, enjoyment, and learning, particularly in piano instruction, are considered not only fundamental aspects of human experience and expression, but also wellsprings of gratification for learners when facilitated effectively (Jager, 2021; Stepniak, 2022). However, despite widespread participation in piano lessons, many students struggle to maintain the motivation necessary to achieve their desired outcomes. In this context, it is imperative for piano instructors to assess students' motivational levels and adapt their pedagogical practices and strategies accordingly to optimize learning outcomes. In the context of increasing globalization, the prominence of diverse social and cultural backgrounds is undeniable. This phenomenon extends to the realm of music, where the piano, originally a foreign instrument in many cultures, has undergone a process of integration and adaptation (Kailing, 2018). This necessitates a

multicultural approach to piano instruction. By considering both the broader social context and the unique characteristics of piano music, educators can cultivate a generation of pianists with a diverse skillset. This approach ensures that piano education remains relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of society. The rise of globalization and increased international cultural exchange have fostered a dominant trend towards multiculturalism, a phenomenon that demonstrably permeates all facets of musical culture (Amit & Wulff, 2022; Schippers, 2022). The piano, a cornerstone instrument in contemporary society, boasts a multitude of functionalities and a wide audience base. This underscores the critical importance of cultivating piano talent. As piano instruction serves as a pivotal element in talent development, implementing a multicultural approach to piano pedagogy is not merely a contemporary exigency, but rather a societal imperative. Multiculturalism refers to the cognitive framework through which individuals understand and analyse diverse cultures (Stogianni et al., 2021). In today's globalized economic landscape, characterized by increasing integration, cultures from various countries are interweaving, leading to a flourishing of cultural diversity. A multicultural teaching philosophy emphasizes the incorporation and respect for a wide range of cultural backgrounds, races, genders, religious beliefs, languages, ages, and abilities within the learning process. This approach fosters the development of students' multicultural awareness and cross-cultural communication and understanding. Effective teaching strategies and methods are fundamental to igniting intrinsic motivation in piano beginners, ultimately leading to successful learning outcomes (Hallam, 2002; McPherson, 2005). During the teaching and learning process, it is equally critical for instructors to provide encouragement and celebrate students' incremental progress (Creech & Hallam, 2011). For instance, lesson duration should be carefully planned based on students' attention spans. As piano beginners, they may struggle to sustain focus for extended periods of uninterrupted formal instruction. Shorter lessons can help ensure students' learning motivation and efficiency are continuously enhanced. Furthermore, it is recommended that parents or guardians of young piano learners be offered opportunities to participate in the learning process. Given their deeper understanding of their children's capacities and capabilities, parents can provide valuable insights that can further support learning. Research suggests that even when educators employ similar instructional strategies, the impact on students can vary significantly. In some cases, students lose motivation to continue learning or fail to

experience an adequate level of enjoyment that fosters continued musical instrument study (Pitts et al., 2000). Costa-Giomi investigated the learning motivation of 67 fourth-grade children participating in a piano project (Costa-Giomi, 2004). The analysis revealed that a significant number of students found piano instruction uninteresting. This lack of intrinsic motivation resulted in their primary engagement stemming from parental pressure or other external forces, rather than internal desire. However, instructors can play a crucial role in enhancing piano learning motivation among young students. This can be achieved by incorporating student preferences and choices into the learning process, adjusting practice intensity and duration to optimize engagement, and fostering a sense of accomplishment through tangible progress. Additionally, research suggests that satisfying students' psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and social connection can further bolster their learning motivation. Research on piano pedagogy suggests that adults between the ages of 25 and 50 represent a growing demographic of piano learners, often favouring the instrument over others (Cooper, 2001; Jutras, 2006). However, studies also indicate that adult learners can become easily discouraged if they fail to achieve a satisfactory level of proficiency within a specific timeframe (Adamyan, 2018; Sutoyo, 2023). Understanding the motivations of adult piano beginners is therefore crucial for developing appropriate teaching practices that enhance their learning experience and cater to their individual needs (Flowers & Murphy, 2001). It is essential to acknowledge that a single teaching method may not be suitable for all adult learners. Qualified piano instructors must tailor their pedagogical approaches and employ practices that cater to individual student needs (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020; Roulston et al., 2015). According to Du multicultural education recognizes and addresses the unique characteristics of students from diverse backgrounds (Du, 2022). These differences, encompassing ways of thinking, learning styles, language use, and social interactions, necessitate personalized teaching plans. By respecting individual needs, educators can help students achieve optimal learning outcomes (Rachmatsyah, 2024). Furthermore, multicultural education emphasizes the value of cultural diversity and inclusivity. It discourages the notion of cultural superiority or inferiority, promoting instead an appreciation for the richness of different cultural perspectives. Students are encouraged to engage with and understand individuals from various backgrounds, fostering cross-cultural communication and understanding. This emphasis on interaction is seen as crucial for cultivating students' multicultural awareness and fostering cross-

cultural competence.

1.1 Rationale and Main Objective

Globalization has fostered increased interconnectedness and cultural exchange. This phenomenon presents a unique opportunity to integrate diverse cultural concepts into piano pedagogy. However, a clear understanding of effective integration methods and strategies is necessary to maximize the benefits for piano students. Therefore, this study aims to investigate and analyse how cultural concepts can be incorporated into piano teaching practices within a globalized context. The research will explore various integration methods and strategies, with the goal of identifying effective approaches that enhance student learning, broaden their cultural awareness, and cultivate a deeper appreciation for music.

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Design

We adopted a mixed methods approach to investigate the integration methods and strategies of cultural concepts in piano teaching under a globalized context. This approach involved collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. We distributed surveys or questionnaires to a sample of piano teachers and students to gather their perspectives and experiences with cultural integration in piano lessons. Additionally, we conducted semi-structured interviews or focus groups with a smaller sample of teachers and students to gain deeper insights into their specific practices, challenges, and perceived benefits of integrating cultural concepts into piano pedagogy.

2.2 Participants

A purposive sampling was employed to recruit 35 participants for this study. Participants were drawn from The Piano & Keyboard Division of the School of Music at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen. All participants were at least 18 years old and volunteered to participate after providing informed consent. The research adhered to ethical guidelines regarding voluntary participation and human subject research.

2.3 Surveys/Questionnaires

In the first phase of our study, we administered a standardized survey instrument consisting of 12 multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions. Designed to target piano teachers and students, the survey items focused on their attitudes, experiences, and perceptions regarding cultural

integration in piano lessons. The Likert-scale questions explored aspects such as the importance of cultural integration in piano pedagogy, the perceived benefits and challenges associated with it, and the level of agreement with various statements related to effective integration methods. With a completion time of approximately 10 minutes, 33 out of the 35 distributed surveys were returned. We concluded the data collection process by expressing our gratitude to the participants for their time and providing a debriefing session.

2.4 Qualitative Analysis

In the second phase of our study, we conducted semi-structured interviews to gain deeper insights from participants. These interviews focused on exploring the specific approaches piano teachers use to integrate cultural concepts into their lessons, the challenges they face in this process, and the benefits they observe for their students. A total of 10 semi-structured questions guided the interviews, which typically lasted approximately 25 minutes. All participants provided informed consent prior to the interview, and the research adhered to ethical guidelines. In the final phase of data collection, we conducted classroom observations to complement the survey and interview data. These observations focused on directly observing piano lessons where cultural concepts were being integrated. This allowed us to gain firsthand insights into the teachers' implementation strategies, student engagement with the cultural elements, and the overall classroom dynamics during these lessons.

2.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using GraphPad Prism version 9.5.1, with a significance level set at $\alpha = 0.05$. Quantitative data from the surveys were analysed descriptively, including calculating means, standard deviations (SDs), percentages, and frequencies to summarize participant demographics and responses on the Likert scale. Qualitative data from the interviews and classroom observations were analysed thematically. This involved coding the data to identify recurring patterns, themes, and concepts related to teachers' approaches to cultural integration, the challenges they encountered, and the perceived benefits observed for students.

3. RESULTS

A total of 33 participants were involved in the study, with the age

distribution being 12 (36.4%) between 18-24 years old, 15 (45.5%) between 25-34 years old, and 6 (18.2%) 35 years old and over. The gender breakdown consisted of 8 males (24.2%) and 25 females (75.8%). In terms of roles, 18 (54.5%) were piano teachers and 15 (45.5%) were piano students (see Figure 1 and Figure 2).

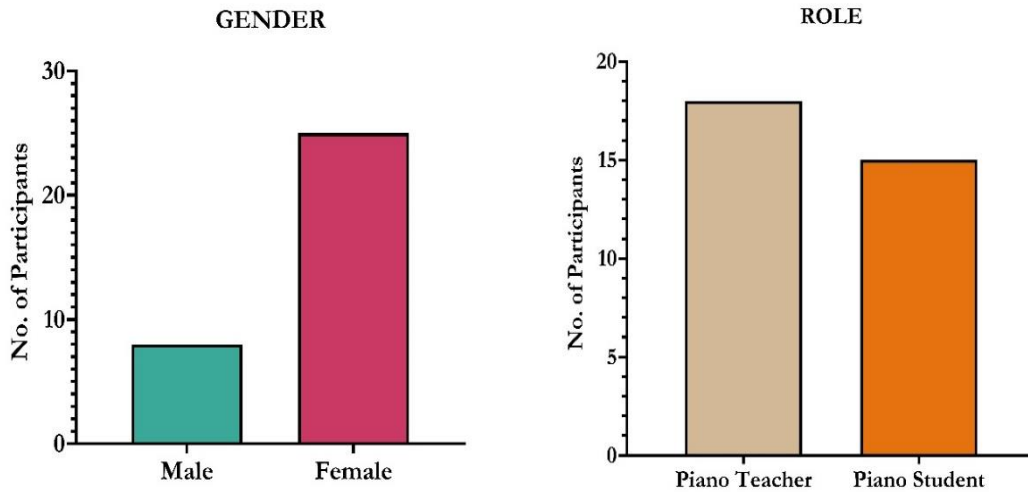


Figure 1: Analysis of the Distribution of Participant Demographics Based on Gender and Age

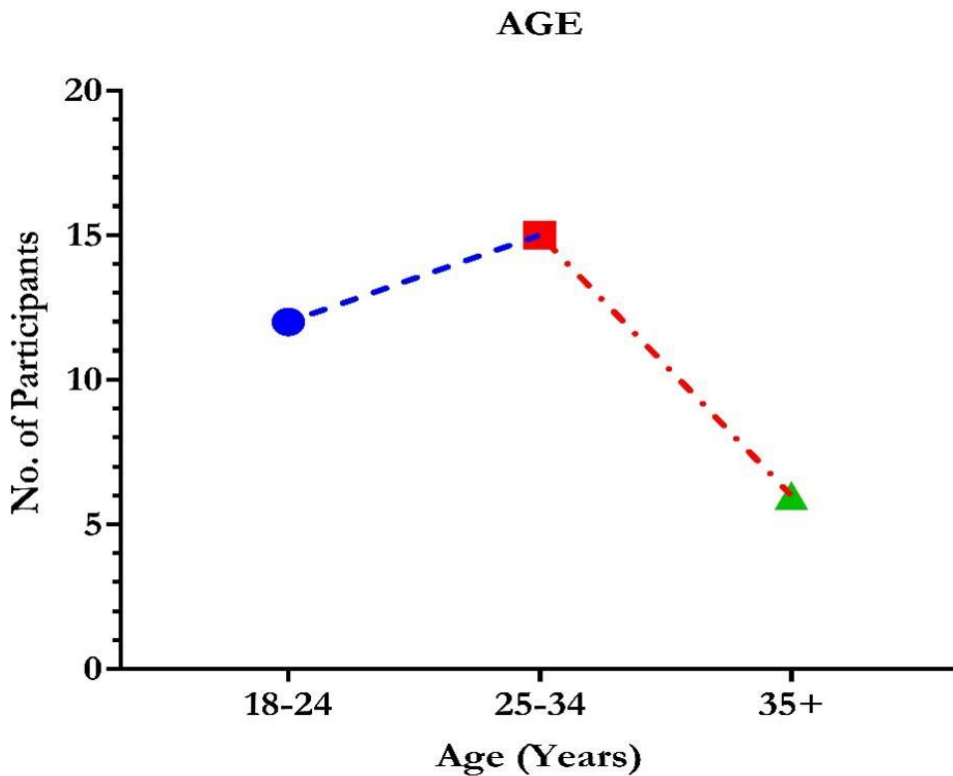


Figure 2: The Distribution of Participants Based on Age Categories from 18 to 35+ years

Increased student interest and motivation received the highest agreement ($M = 4.3$, $SD = 0.6$) with 87.9% agreeing and only 3% disagreeing. Similarly, a strong majority agreed on the value of cultural integration for fostering a deeper understanding ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 0.7$) and appreciation for diverse music (81.8% agree). Agreement lessened for the benefits of enhanced cultural awareness ($M = 4.0$, $SD = 0.8$) and critical thinking skills ($M = 3.8$, $SD = 0.9$), with 75.8% and 63.6% agreeing, respectively. The development of communication and collaboration skills received the lowest level of agreement ($M = 3.5$, $SD = 1.1$) with only 45.5% agreeing (See Figure 3).

Perceptions on Benefits of Cultural Integration

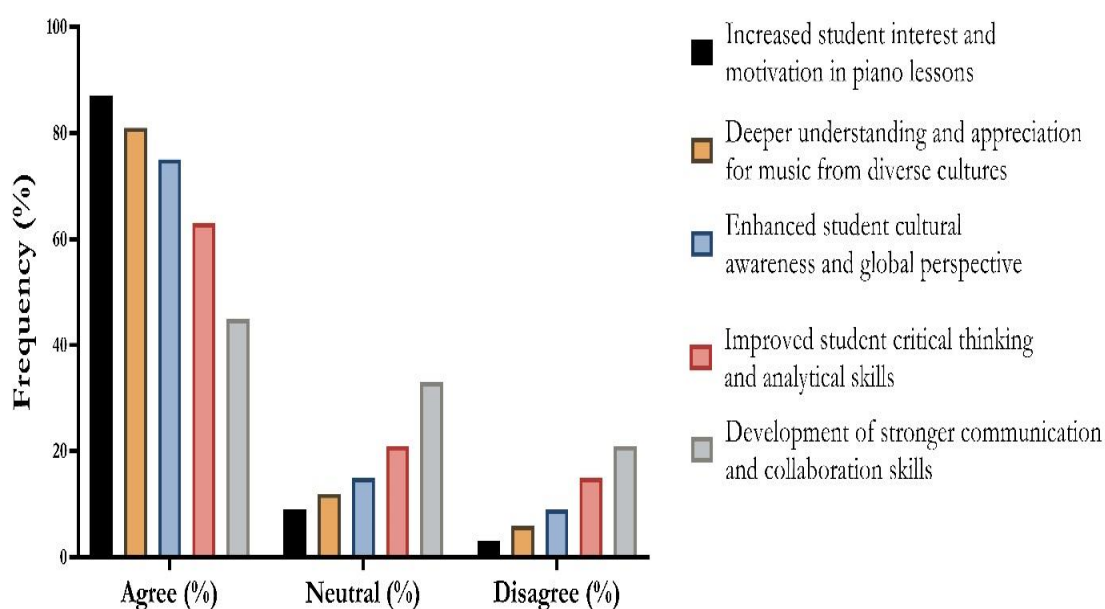


Figure 3: Teacher and Student Perceptions on Benefits of Cultural Integration (Likert Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

In Table 1, a high percentage of participants favoured utilizing music from diverse cultures ($N = 31$, 93.9%) with a mean score of 4.4 ($SD = 0.6$), indicating strong agreement on its effectiveness. Discussing historical and cultural context ($N = 28$, 84.8%) also received high endorsement ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 0.7$).

Incorporating culturally relevant performance practices ($N = 25$, 75.8%) garnered a mean score of 4.0 ($SD = 0.8$), suggesting positive perceptions. Encouraging independent exploration of diverse music ($N = 22$, 66.7%) had a mean score of 3.8 ($SD = 0.9$), and inviting guest musicians from various backgrounds ($N = 18$, 54.5%) received a mean score of 3.6 ($SD =$

1.0), indicating a preference for these methods, but to a lesser extent than the previous ones.

Table 1: Teacher and Student Preferences for Integration Methods (Frequency and Mean Score)

Method	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Mean Score (SD)
Utilizing music from different cultures (e.g., introducing pieces by composers from various countries)	31	93.9	4.4 (0.6)
Discussing the historical and cultural context of musical pieces	28	84.8	4.2 (0.7)
Incorporating culturally relevant performance practices (e.g., articulation styles)	25	75.8	4.0 (0.8)
Encouraging students to explore music from diverse cultures on their own	22	66.7	3.8 (0.9)
Inviting guest musicians from different cultural backgrounds for workshops or demonstrations	18	54.5	3.6 (1.0)

Reported Challenges of Cultural Integration

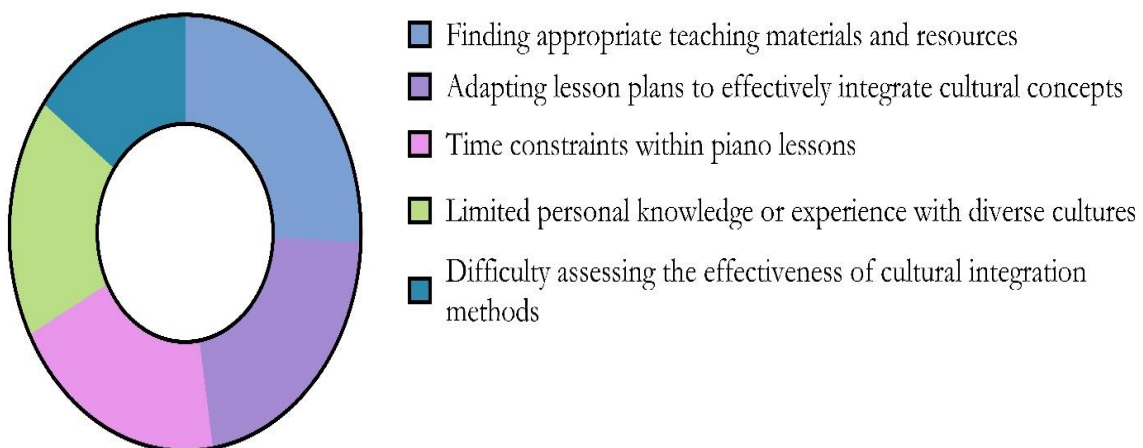


Figure 4: Most Frequently Reported Challenges of Cultural Integration (N = 33)

In Figure 4, the most frequently reported challenges associated with integrating cultural concepts into piano lessons centered around finding suitable teaching materials (N = 26, 78.8%). Adapting lesson plans effectively (N = 22, 66.7%) and time constraints within lessons (N = 20,

60.6%) were also cited by a significant portion of participants. Additionally, limitations in teachers' personal knowledge of diverse cultures (N = 18, 54.5%) and difficulty assessing the impact of these methods (N = 15, 45.5%) emerged as challenges faced by educators.

Table 2: Thematic Analysis of Approaches for Integrating Cultural Concepts

Theme	Description	Interview Quote
Musical Exploration	Introducing music from diverse cultures through repertoire selection.	"I like to introduce students to composers from different countries, like exploring Baroque music from France and then contrasting it with the Romantic style from Poland."
Historical and Cultural Context	Discussing the historical and cultural background of musical pieces.	"When teaching a piece by Chopin, I might talk about the political climate in Poland at the time and how it influenced his music."
Performance Practices	Integrating culturally specific performance techniques.	"For a piece influenced by Indian music, I might teach students about gamakas (ornamentation) and how they differ from Western vibrato."
Active Learning	Encouraging students to explore music from diverse cultures independently.	"I recommend websites with music from different parts of the world and encourage students to find pieces they like to explore on their own."
Cross-Cultural Collaboration	Inviting guest musicians from different cultural backgrounds for workshops or demonstrations.	"Once a year, I invite a local Indian tabla player to do a workshop with my students to expose them to a different drumming tradition."

In Table 2, thematic analysis of interviews revealed various approaches for integrating cultural concepts. Musical exploration involved introducing composers from diverse backgrounds (e.g., contrasting French Baroque with Polish Romanticism). Teachers discussed historical and cultural contexts (e.g., political influences on Chopin's music). Culturally specific performance practices were integrated (e.g., teaching gamakas in Indian-influenced pieces). Active learning was encouraged (e.g., recommending websites for independent exploration). Finally, cross-cultural collaboration involved inviting guest musicians (e.g., a tabla player for a drumming workshop).

Table 3: Thematic Analysis of Challenges Faced in Integrating Cultural Concepts

Theme	Description	Interview Quote
Finding Resources	Difficulty locating appropriate teaching materials and resources that effectively integrate cultural concepts.	"There's a lack of beginner-friendly piano repertoire that explicitly explores music from diverse cultures."
Lesson Planning	Challenges in adapting lesson plans to seamlessly integrate cultural concepts without sacrificing core piano skills development.	"It can be tricky to balance teaching the technical aspects of a piece while also discussing its cultural context."
Time Constraints	Feeling limited by the time available in piano lessons to adequately explore cultural concepts.	"With limited lesson time, it's sometimes difficult to delve deep into the cultural context of a piece without sacrificing practice time."
Teacher Knowledge	Feeling limited by their own personal knowledge or experience with diverse cultures.	"I'm not an expert on all world music traditions, so I sometimes hesitate to integrate something I might not fully understand."
Assessment Challenges	Difficulty in effectively assessing the impact of cultural integration methods on student learning.	"It's hard to measure how much students are actually retaining from the cultural discussions we have in lessons."

In Table 3, thematic analysis of interview data exposed challenges in integrating cultural concepts. Finding appropriate resources proved difficult (e.g., lack of beginner-friendly culturally diverse repertoire). Teachers grappled with adapting lesson plans to seamlessly weave in cultural elements while maintaining core piano skill development. Time constraints limited in-depth exploration of cultural contexts within lessons. Some educators felt restricted by their own knowledge of diverse cultures. Finally, assessing the effectiveness of cultural integration methods on student learning presented difficulties.

Table 4(a): Thematic Analysis of Perceived Benefits of Integrating Cultural Concepts

Theme	Description	Interview Quote
Increased Motivation	Students demonstrate greater interest and motivation in piano lessons due to the cultural engagement.	"My students seem more excited about learning piano when they can connect the music to different cultures."
Deeper Appreciation	Students develop a deeper understanding and appreciation for music from diverse cultures.	"I've noticed my students are more curious about exploring music from different parts of the world on their own."

Table 4(b): Thematic Analysis of Perceived Benefits of Integrating Cultural Concepts

Theme	Description	Interview Quote
Global Perspective	Students gain a broader cultural awareness and a more global perspective through music.	"Integrating cultural concepts helps students see music as a universal language that connects people across borders."
Critical Thinking	Cultural integration encourages students to develop critical thinking and analytical skills.	"By discussing the historical context of a piece, students learn to think critically about the music they play."
Communication & Collaboration	Cultural exploration in piano lessons fosters communication and collaboration skills.	"Inviting guest musicians from different backgrounds allows students to experience the joy of making music together despite cultural differences."

In Table 4, thematic analysis of interviews unveiled several perceived benefits of integrating cultural concepts. Increased student motivation was evident (e.g., excitement about connecting music to cultures). Students developed a deeper appreciation for diverse music (e.g., curiosity to explore music from various regions). Cultural integration fostered a broader global perspective (e.g., seeing music as a universal language). Critical thinking skills were enhanced (e.g., analysing music through historical context discussions). Finally, cultural exploration promoted communication and collaboration (e.g., experiencing music-making together with guest musicians from different backgrounds).

Table 5: Thematic Analysis of Teacher Recommendations for Improved Cultural Integration

Theme	Description	Interview Quote
Curriculum Development:	Call for the development of more readily available and comprehensive teaching materials that integrate cultural concepts effectively.	"It would be helpful to have resources like lesson plans or activity guides specifically designed for integrating cultural aspects into piano lessons."
Professional Development:	Emphasis on the need for professional development opportunities for piano teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills in integrating cultural concepts.	"Workshops or online courses focusing on integrating cultural concepts into piano pedagogy would be beneficial for teachers"

In Table 5, Teacher recommendations from the interviews centered on

improved resources and professional development. Participants called for the creation of more accessible and comprehensive teaching materials (e.g., lesson plans or activity guides) specifically designed to integrate cultural aspects into piano lessons. Additionally, they emphasized the need for professional development opportunities, such as workshops or online courses, to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills in integrating cultural concepts into their pedagogy.

4. DISCUSSION

We found that participants generally held positive views on integrating cultural concepts into piano lessons. Surveys revealed strong agreement on the benefits of this approach, particularly for increasing student motivation and fostering a deeper appreciation for music from diverse cultures. Both teachers and students viewed cultural integration as valuable for developing a broader global perspective and critical thinking skills. A diversified piano curriculum at the university level is essential for enriching students' learning experiences and fostering appreciation for diverse musical styles from various cultures. Within this multicultural educational framework, effective piano pedagogy requires instructors to develop multifaceted thinking, adapt instruction to students' individual learning styles, address their fundamental musical needs, and strive to create a viable model for multicultural piano education that reflects modern advancements. Introducing musical works from diverse cultural backgrounds is a cornerstone of this approach. By integrating different styles and their unique creative characteristics into piano courses, highlighting their cultural contexts, and acknowledging the value of music from other countries, instructors can subtly cultivate a sense of cultural equality and broad perspective in their students. Students' engagement with and appreciation for these works fosters a deeper understanding and experience of diverse cultural backgrounds. For example, incorporating Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and jazz styles can provide a comprehensive understanding of musical expression. Furthermore, explaining and discussing musical styles and techniques during class sessions allows students to better grasp and master performance skills specific to different styles. When teaching Romantic music, instructors can explain how to express emotions and utilize techniques like pauses and vibrato for enhanced expressivity. Similarly, when teaching Jazz, explanations of chord progressions and improvisation techniques can demonstrate rhythmic elements and personal

expression in the music. Situational teaching methods can significantly enhance student learning by incorporating realistic scenarios like performances and concerts into the curriculum. This practical approach allows students to learn piano techniques within the context of these situations. Additionally, role-playing exercises and simulated competitions can actively engage students, boosting their interest and motivation. Du found that modern educational technologies can further enrich the learning experience (Du, 2022). Multimedia resources, including videos and audio recordings, provide students with demonstrations of diverse piano techniques and styles. Furthermore, online classrooms and interactive platforms facilitate remote teaching and interactive learning. The incorporation of virtual piano teaching software, such as piano simulation and electronic piano software, can create a more vivid and intuitive learning environment. A diversified approach to evaluation is crucial for piano curriculum design in universities. This student-centered model emphasizes the development of evaluation criteria that consider students' individual circumstances. These criteria should encompass not only piano performance level, but also learning attitude, participation, and overall development. A combination of comprehensive evaluation, performance evaluation, and learning outcome evaluation provides a holistic assessment of students' piano skills and learning effectiveness. Furthermore, encouraging student self-evaluation and peer evaluation allows students to gain a deeper understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, fostering self-discovery and problem-solving within the learning process. Peer evaluation can also promote communication, collaboration, and a heightened sense of awareness and participation among students, ultimately leading to better achievement of teaching goals. Finally, differentiated evaluation acknowledges the unique characteristics and needs of students at various levels. For instance, simpler and more accessible self-evaluation methods can be implemented for beginners to track their progress, while more detailed and scientific methods can be used for advanced students to comprehensively assess their performance skills and artistic abilities. By tailoring evaluation criteria and methods to students' individual situations, instructors can effectively support students in achieving their personalized learning goals. Our interviews with piano teachers identified various approaches used to integrate cultural concepts. These included introducing music from different cultures through repertoire selection, discussing the historical and cultural context of musical pieces, incorporating culturally specific performance practices, and encouraging students to explore music independently. However, teachers

also reported challenges in finding appropriate teaching materials and adapting lesson plans to seamlessly integrate cultural aspects. Time constraints within lessons, limitations in teachers' personal knowledge of diverse cultures, and difficulty in assessing the effectiveness of these methods were also cited as hurdles. The current landscape of piano pedagogy is dominated by relatively conventional and straightforward instructional methods, primarily centered on individual and group instruction. These approaches often rely heavily on teacher demonstrations followed by student imitation. While this method facilitates targeted instruction, allowing teachers to identify and rectify student errors promptly, it possesses inherent limitations. Notably, it neglects to cultivate students' independent creative and critical thinking skills, relegating them to a passive role of imitation. This, in turn, can hinder the overall development of effective piano playing skills (Kailing, 2018). Within a multicultural educational context, the content of piano pedagogy should transcend its traditional focus on European works. Expanding the curriculum to include a wider range of Asian and Latin American piano compositions would broaden students' musical horizons. This diversification of teaching repertoire can effectively guide students' exploration of music, unlocking their full potential and fostering innovative thinking. Furthermore, incorporating renowned piano works that embody Chinese musical characteristics can serve a dual purpose. It can not only introduce students to the rich tradition of Chinese music, but also cultivate a sense of national pride. When teaching European piano works, instructors should move beyond the established canon. Integrating contemporary elements into the curriculum can enrich the depth and breadth of piano education. Finally, ensuring diversity in assessment methods is also crucial. A study by Kailing (2018) postulated that the composition of the piano teaching staff is a critical factor influencing the effectiveness of piano instruction (Kailing, 2018). Currently, challenges exist in both the size and qualifications of the piano teaching workforce. Aside from external instructors and part-time faculty, the pool of full-time piano teachers is relatively limited, hindering the ability to meet the demands of current teaching needs. With regards to teacher qualifications, the majority hold undergraduate or graduate degrees, with a scarcity of instructors possessing doctoral-level credentials. This creates a gap in the overall quality of piano education. While advancements have been made in the well-rounded skillsets of current teachers, continuous professional development remains paramount. To stay abreast of evolving trends, piano instructors must continually enhance their comprehensive abilities and

cultivate innovative teaching approaches, thereby avoiding stagnant pedagogical methods. According to Kailing the current curriculum design for piano instruction presents several areas for improvement (Kailing, 2018). Firstly, within the music performance specialization, courses beyond individual piano instruction are offered, including Double Piano Performance, Chamber Music Performance Guidance, Piano History (at the postgraduate level), and Piano Pedagogy. However, theoretical disciplines such as Piano Pedagogy and Piano History are only offered for one term, suggesting a lack of emphasis on these crucial areas. Consequently, the curriculum prioritizes skill development at the expense of musical understanding and neglects the cultivation of students' aesthetic appreciation of music. Our analysis revealed that Teachers emphasized the need for more readily available and comprehensive teaching materials designed to integrate cultural concepts effectively. They called for the development of resources like lesson plans and activity guides specifically tailored to piano pedagogy. Additionally, there was a strong emphasis on the importance of professional development opportunities, such as workshops and online courses, to equip teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to confidently integrate cultural concepts into their teaching. We propose that the current repertoire selection in piano pedagogy during the school period leans heavily towards works from the Classical, Baroque, and Romantic eras, with a particular emphasis on the Classical period. Conversely, compositions from the Impressionist era and, notably, Chinese national piano works are rarely included. This focus on foreign piano works, with minimal representation of outstanding Chinese compositions, hinders the transmission of a diverse piano culture to students. Consequently, students develop limited exposure to their national piano heritage and historical context. This approach impedes the transmission of China's rich piano culture to future generations. Previous findings by Su suggest that several schools require significant improvements in their cultural instruction faculty (Su, 2018). Firstly, recruiting highly qualified cultural educators is crucial to ensure the quality of cultural education offered. During the recruitment process, schools should prioritize a rigorous assessment of candidates' qualifications and credentials. Secondly, schools should invest in the professional development of existing cultural faculty to enhance their cultural expertise. For instance, Inner Mongolia Normal University exemplifies this approach by placing a strong emphasis on cultural pedagogy for music education majors. They have demonstrably improved the quality of cultural education by increasing the proportion of cultural courses specifically for piano

students. In a multicultural educational landscape, such curricular reforms are essential and serve as a valuable model for other schools in China. Analysis by Su reveals that optimizing piano teaching styles hinges on a two-pronged approach. Firstly, a paradigm shift in pedagogical philosophies is necessary (Su, 2018). Within a multicultural educational landscape, piano education must be forward-thinking. It should not only reflect the core values of contemporary social and artistic development, but also anticipate future artistic tastes. This necessitates elevating piano teaching concepts to resonate with a globalized environment. Secondly, a transformation of current teaching styles is essential. Schools should prioritize recruiting piano instructors who embrace progressive pedagogical approaches. This will facilitate the transformation of the faculty's teaching methods. One such approach is perceptual education, which goes beyond imparting piano knowledge and skills. It seeks to cultivate students' deeper understanding of piano artistry. By incorporating this method, instructors can guide students in exploring the social context of music and delve into the intentions of composers. Beyond strengthening piano instruction, enhancing piano practice opportunities is equally important. In recent years, several provinces, including Shandong, Heilongjiang, Hebei, Jiangxi, and Guizhou, have established teaching and performance bases for students. These facilities play a crucial role in nurturing piano talent. Therefore, Chinese schools should actively invest in building practice bases for students. Furthermore, broadening the scope of artistic practice to encompass both Chinese musical culture and international exchange is essential. For instance, the China Conservatory of Music's initiative of organizing a piano teacher and student concert for musical exchange in Salzburg serves as a valuable model.

5. CONCLUSION

Our study investigated the integration of cultural concepts into piano lessons, revealing generally positive attitudes among teachers and students. Surveys indicated strong agreement on the value of this approach for boosting student motivation and appreciation for diverse music. Cultural integration was also seen as beneficial for developing a global perspective and critical thinking skills. However, challenges emerged, including finding appropriate resources, adapting lesson plans, and time constraints. Teacher interviews highlighted specific approaches like using diverse repertoire and discussing historical context, yet limitations in personal cultural knowledge

and assessing effectiveness were acknowledged. To address these needs, teachers recommended the development of comprehensive teaching materials and professional development opportunities focused on integrating cultural concepts into piano pedagogy. By overcoming these challenges and providing the necessary support, educators can create a more engaging and culturally enriching learning environment for their piano students.

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