

**DEVELOPING THE FRAMEWORK OF CHINESE
MUSIC EDUCATION PROGRAM: PERCEPTION
OF PRESERVICE TEACHERS FROM SELECTED
UNIVERSITIES IN GUIZHOU, CHINA**

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UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

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MUSIC EDUCATION PROGRAM: PERCEPTION
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UNIVERSITIES IN GUIZHOU, CHINA**

by

LIU KE

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**PEMBINAAN KERANGKA PROGRAM PENDIDIKAN MUZIK CHINA:
PERSEPSI GURU PRAPERKHIDMATAN DARI UNIVERSITI TERPILIH DI
GUIZHOU, CHINA**

ABSTRAK

Secara umum, program pendidikan guru muzik pra-khidmatan bertujuan untuk melengkapi calon guru muzik dengan pengetahuan dan kemahiran yang diperlukan untuk mengajar muzik di dalam kelas. Oleh itu, kualiti pengajaran di sekolah rendah dan menengah secara langsung dikaitkan dengan kualiti persiapan pra-khidmatan yang diterima oleh guru. Pada masa ini, kajian telah menunjukkan bahawa persiapan guru muzik pra-khidmatan di China, dari segi pengetahuan dan kemahiran, tidak selaras dengan keperluan standard keseluruhan sekolah rendah dan menengah. Ketidakselarasan ini telah menyebabkan kesulitan dalam pekerjaan guru muzik pra-khidmatan, kerana mereka tidak dapat memenuhi standard yang diperlukan untuk guru yang cekap di sekolah rendah dan menengah di China. Selain itu, masalah ini telah menghalang peningkatan kemampuan estetik siswa di sekolah rendah dan menengah. Kajian ini menyelidiki persepsi guru muzik karir awal di sekolah rendah dan menengah untuk menilai keberkesanan program pendidikan guru sebelum perkhidmatan mereka di Guizhou, China. Ia juga meneroka pengaruh yang mempengaruhi persepsi guru muzik peringkat awal kerjaya awal tentang keberkesanan dan keperluan yang dirasakan oleh guru muzik peringkat awal kerjaya awal berkaitan dengan persiapan pengetahuan dan kemahiran sebelum perkhidmatan mereka. Kajian ini menggunakan metodologi penyelidikan kaedah gabungan yang menggunakan soal selidik dan wawancara semi-terstruktur. Pada peringkat 1

penyelidikan, soal selidik telah dilengkapkan oleh 398 guru muzik peringkat awal kerjaya awal di sekolah rendah dan menengah dari universiti-universiti terpilih di Guizhou, China. Pada peringkat 2 penyelidikan, 22 guru muzik sekolah rendah dan menengah yang berasal dari peringkat 1 telah diwawancara untuk menguatkan dan mengimbangi kelemahan dalam soal selidik. Penemuan menunjukkan bahawa guru muzik peringkat awal kerjaya awal di sekolah rendah dan menengah mempunyai asas yang baik dalam pengetahuan dan kemahiran teori pendidikan (ETKS) dan pengetahuan praktikal pendidikan dan kemahiran (EPKS). Kedua-dua faktor ini paling berkesan dalam program untuk guru muzik sebelum perkhidmatan. Sementara itu, penemuan menunjukkan bahawa pengetahuan dan kemahiran persembahan muzik (MPKS) perlu diselaraskan, terutama improvisasi piano pengiringan dan latihan paduan suara. Dan pengetahuan teori muzik dan kemahiran (MTKS) mempunyai keberkesanan rendah dan pembinaan semula keperluan. Kajian ini menyediakan asas empirikal untuk menyemak semula program pendidikan guru muzik sebelum perkhidmatan dan menimbulkan isu penting yang perlu ditangani oleh pendidik guru muzik untuk memastikan graduan sedia untuk mengajar muzik dalam kelas.

**DEVELOPING THE FRAMEWORK OF CHINESE MUSIC
EDUCATION PROGRAM: PERCEPTION OF PRESERVICE TEACHERS
FROM SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN GUIZHOU, CHINA**

ABSTRACT

Preservice music teacher education programs aim to equip prospective music teachers with the knowledge and skills required to teach music in the classroom. The quality of teaching in primary and secondary schools is directly linked to the quality of the preservice preparation that teachers receive. In terms of knowledge and skills, current studies denote that the preparation of preservice music teachers in China does not align well with the overall standard requirements of primary and secondary schools. Such incongruencies have instigated challenges in employing preservice music teachers due to their inability to meet the competency standards required in primary and secondary schools in China and hindered the improvement of primary and secondary school students' aesthetic abilities. This research investigated the perceptions of early-career primary and secondary school music teachers from selected universities in Guizhou offering the preservice music teacher preparation programs to determine the graduates' knowledge and skill. Furthermore, the influences impacting the early-career music teachers' perceptions of effectiveness and requirements in relation to their preservice preparation of knowledge and skills were thoroughly examined. A mixed method design consisting of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used in stages 1 and 2 of this study, respectively. A total of 398 early-career music teachers in primary and secondary schools from selected universities in Guizhou, China, completed the questionnaires in the first

stage. Meanwhile, 22 primary and secondary music teachers from stage 1 were interviewed to strengthen and compensate for the questionnaires' limitations in stage 2. The findings suggest that early-career music teachers in primary and secondary schools have a strong foundation of the education theory knowledge and skills (ETKS) and education practice knowledge and skills (EPKS), both of which form the basis for the preservice music teacher program. On another note, the piano improvisation accompaniments and choral rehearsals under music performance knowledge and skills (MPKS) required modification given its low effectiveness. This research raises key concerns that music educators must address, which lays the groundwork for revising the preservice music teacher education program and ensuring that graduates are adequately prepared for classroom music teaching.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research background, followed by the research problem, study objectives and questions, and research scope. Notably, the theoretical and practical significance of the study and the definition of the keywords lays the groundwork for future works. Graduates from four universities in Guizhou, China, were selected to provide references for the preparation of preservice music teachers, which does not align with the requirements of primary and secondary school music teachers. The teachers' perceptions of performance and requirements were examined following the research problem.

1.2 Research Background

The popularisation and industrialisation of higher education since the end of the 20th century have holistically developed higher education in China (Liu & Zhao, 2018), which has transitioned from monocultural or elite education to diversified education or 'education for all'. Simply put, education for admission and employment has transformed into free and all-round development of education (Cai, 2016; Li, 2016; Liu, 2020; Xu, 2019; Wang, 2013a; Zhao, 2019). In China, music teacher education is at par with the rapid development of higher education (Dai, 2014). With numerous colleges and universities offering a major in music education, this course has gained much popularity in colleges and universities on the Chinese mainland (Pu, 2018; Xu, 2014).

Regardless, flaws in the quality of music education and challenges in graduate employment are key factors hindering its rapid development (Dai, 2014). In particular,

the lack of alignment between preservice music teachers' preparation of knowledge and skills and their requirements in primary and secondary schools (Cao, 2020; Feng, 2017; Fan, 2019; Lu, 2024; Yang, 2016; Zhou & Cao, 2022) has hampered the preservice music teachers' employment and undermined their competence in teaching in primary and secondary schools. These bottlenecks significantly affect the improvement of primary and secondary students' aesthetic abilities.

Tertiary-level preservice music teacher education primarily aims to cultivate qualified music teachers with specialised talents in aesthetic education (Zhao, 2009) for primary and secondary schools (Ballantyne, & Packer, 2004). As a key component of aesthetic education in primary and secondary schools, music education plays a pivotal role in imparting quality education in schools (Wu, 2020; Xu, 2017). Aesthetic education is crucial for cultivating students' all-round development of morality, intelligence, physique, and beauty as a counterbalance to the highly rationalised world (Denac, 2014). Evidently, music education in primary and secondary schools is an important means of aesthetic education for students and their all-around development education. Preservice music teachers are key to cultivating musical quality among primary and secondary students (Li, 2011). Thus, it is imperative to develop highly-competent preservice music teachers for the cultivation and overall development of primary and secondary school students' aesthetic abilities.

A program is a series of instructions that can be computerised to run an operation. In this context, the term "program" refers to the preservice education training program for primary and secondary school music teachers. A robust program positively influences the development of students' comprehensive qualities and their preparation of knowledge and skills. Existing university-trained preservice music

teachers are struggling to meet the prerequisites for music teachers in primary and secondary schools given the poorly-designed program (Wang, 2019a). This incompetence has negatively affected the holistic abilities of music education majors, their employment rates, and the improvement of primary and secondary school students' aesthetic abilities.

The lack of alignment between preservice music teachers' preparation of knowledge and skills and the requirements of primary and secondary school music teachers is attributed to the poor preservice education program design. Hence, it is crucial to address this issue by constructing a robust program for music teachers' preservice education in universities. Investigating the knowledge and skills performance of graduates from selected universities in Guizhou in the context of preservice music teacher preparation programs would significantly contribute to the development of an effective program design (Ballantyne & Packer 2004).

Guizhou Province is an underdeveloped region located in the southwest of China. Jointly released by the National Bureau of Statistics and the Leading Group Office of the Seventh National Population Census of the State Council in 2021, the 'Sixth Bulletin of the Seventh National Population Census - Educational Background of the Population' ranked this province 24th and 25th among the 31 provinces in the mainland in terms of educational background and the average years of education, respectively. The statistics indicate a below average educational level.

Li (2021) highlighted the need for music teachers in Guizhou Province to increase their ideological awareness and professionalise the components of music education by improving their education level. Simply put, professional skills require professional development. Zhang (2013a), who examined graduates from the music

education program at Guizhou Normal University, discovered the relatively low level of music education in western higher education institutions, with a certain gap compared to the central and eastern regions. The existing preservice music education talents could not fully meet the prerequisites for teaching music in middle school. In his speech titled “Cultivating Teachers for Local (Ethnic) Music Education in Primary and Secondary Schools” at the China-ASEAN Music and Dance Education Forum held at Guizhou Education University on 20 November 2024, Professor Chen Zhongsong from Guizhou Normal University stated as follows: “currently, there is a widespread shortage of high-level teachers in primary and secondary schools in Guizhou Province”. Summarily, the incongruence between preservice music education graduates’ knowledge and skills preparation in Guizhou Province and the actual requirements for primary and secondary school music teachers is undeniable.

Creswell (2015) proposed that “4-5 case study objects are appropriate” and that “maximal variation sampling methods are helpful for including multiple perspectives in qualitative research”. Consequently, preservice music education graduates were selected as study samples from four universities in Guizhou Province: Guizhou Normal University (GZNU), Guizhou Education University (GZEU), Xingyi Normal University for Nationalities (XNUN), and Liupanshui Normal University (LNU).

The aforementioned establishments were chosen for specific reasons. Based on the statistics derived from the Guizhou Province university entrance examination and university admission major catalogue in 2020 (Volume One and Volume Two) (*贵州省 2020 年高考高校招生专业目录 (上、下)*), 11 universities offered preservice music teacher education programs. The 2020 enrolment data from the Examinations

and Admissions Authority of Guizhou Province (*贵州省招生考试院网站*) website revealed GZNU and GZEU to have the highest and XNUN to have the lowest professional admission scorelines for the program.

The GZNU is located in the provincial capital of Guizhou, known as Guiyang. The China Alumni Association University Ranking (2020) (*中国校友会大学排名网站*) ranked this establishment as the best normal university in Guizhou province. Notably, GZNU has cultivated many music teachers for primary and secondary schools across the province. Also located in Guiyang, GZEU has trained a substantial number of competent primary and secondary school music teachers. Approximately 70.73% of the preservice music teacher graduates from GZEU are employed as primary and secondary school teachers based on the 2018 employment data (Guizhou Education University, (2018). In line with information provided on the Ministry of Education of China website in 2022 (*中华人民共和国教育部网站*), GZNU and GZEU's preservice music teacher education programs are recognised as first-class national programs (Ministry of Education of China, 2015).

This research primarily aimed to examine the preparation and performance of early-career music teachers in primary and secondary schools, with emphasis on those who have graduated from four Guizhou-based universities, and develop a framework that assists in aligning preservice music teacher education with the practical requirements of primary and secondary schools in China.

First, the study sought to determine the specific knowledge and skills integral for early-career music teachers in primary and secondary schools in China. Second, the current work aimed to evaluate the performance of early-career music teachers who have graduated from four selected universities in Guizhou. The evaluation

focused on how well these teachers apply the knowledge and skills acquired during their preservice education to their current teaching practices in the context of tertiary-level preservice music teacher preparation programs.

Third, this research proposed a comprehensive framework that delineates the link between preservice music teachers' acquisition of knowledge and skills and the practical requirements of music teaching in primary and secondary schools in China. This framework would serve as a guideline for improving the alignment between teacher preparation programs and the actual requirements of the teaching profession.

This empirical work serves as a frame of reference for revising and developing preservice music teacher education programs in China, advancing the understanding of preservice music teacher education in the country, and promoting the development of the preservice music education system and the improvement of music education quality of the primary and secondary schools in China.

1.3 Problem Statement

Despite searching numerous academic databases such as CNKI, Wanfang Data, Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and Proquest, no research has focused on the misalignment between preservice music teachers' preparation of knowledge and skills and the requirements of primary and secondary schools in China to date. Notwithstanding, the following studies have made indirect references to this issue:

One study on reforming the music education professional dance course (Wang, Y., & Zhang, Y. 2023) based on the compulsory education art curriculum (2022) proposed "reforming the music program settings, integrating the music main line into the opera and the dance". The teachers' music education response strategies were

examined following the double reduction policy (Kuang & Li, 2022). In analysing the issues associated with double reduction, this study recommended “integrating the music education resources with the music education resources of the primary and secondary schools and helping the primary and secondary schools to broaden the form of music activities in the primary and secondary schools”. Another study analysing the challenges in tertiary-level music education program and corresponding solution (Liu, 2016) proposed “the integration of Chinese and foreign music history and masterpiece appreciation courses, the integration of harmony foundation and piano accompaniment, and piano foundation”, and that “the teachers should prepare lessons together and strengthen the study and independent practice”. Research on the education curriculum of music teachers in colleges and universities analysed music teaching material based on primary and secondary schools (Zhang, 2017), with suggestions for reforming the course “objectives, content, implementation, and evaluation” following the primary and secondary school music teaching material.

From a macroscopic perspective, research on the disconnection between tertiary-level preservice music teacher education and corresponding requirement for primary and secondary schools in China (Chen, 2017) highlighted the problems and the requirements related to the music teachers’ skills. The author proposed reforming the program content and setting, teaching methods and practice systems, as well as the preparation of teachers to address this disconnection. Another relevant study examined the misalignment between music education concepts, educational content, and program systems in universities and basic education in primary and middle schools (Feng, 2017). Some solutions were recommended to address the disconnection between university-level and primary and middle-level music education. The development of music education and its underlying philosophy in normal universities

was also examined to address the lack of teaching resources, the unreasonable construction of the music education system, and the lack of clear and independent disciplinary values (Wang, 2013b). Despite the prominence of, the intellectual tendency of music education, the empirical construction of music education proved weak. Furthermore, existing issues and teaching-related reforms of music education in normal universities (Huang, 2018) were discussed to analyse the successful experience of music education in the United States and France and the challenges hampering music education in China's colleges and normal universities. Reform strategies were put forward to address the teaching content and mode, student source problem-solving, and resource perfection.

Some studies in China investigated the disconnection between music teacher preservice education in universities and music education in primary and secondary schools from the perspective of course setting. For example, research on the connection between music education in normal universities and colleges and basic music courses in the 21st century (Meng, 2007) suggested “paying attention to the study of national program standard and getting out of normal universities and into new classrooms”.

These studies highlighted the general condition of music education reform in China, the national music education system, analysis of current issues, and viable solutions. Other scholars primarily denoted issues from a program development perspective, with certain reform solutions following their expertise. Despite much research on the mismatch between the preparation of knowledge and skills for preservice music teachers and the requirements of early-career music teachers in primary and secondary schools, these studies mainly used literature analysis combined

with some of the researchers' personal experiences. Such qualitative techniques presented opinions without systematic data analysis or statistical backing. Quantitative works on early-career music teachers in primary and secondary schools in China remain underexamined.

1.4 Research Objectives

The general purpose of this research lies in investigating the knowledge and skill performance of graduates from selected universities in Guizhou in the context of their universities' preservice music teacher preparation programs based on the research problems. The requirements for preservice music teacher preparation were analysed in the context of early-career music teachers in primary and secondary schools. Furthermore, a comprehensive framework was developed to analyse preservice music teachers' preparation of the knowledge and skills in relation to the requirements of early-career music teachers in primary and secondary schools. The specific research objectives are presented as follows:

1. To identify requirements concerning preservice preparation for early-career primary and secondary music teachers in China.
2. To investigate the knowledge and skill performance of graduates from selected universities in Guizhou within the context of their universities' preservice music teacher preparation programs.
3. To map a framework that better align the university's preservice music teacher preparation with the requirements of the primary and secondary music teachers in China.

1.5 Research Questions

The current research questions are addressed in this study:

1. What are the requirements concerning preservice preparation for early-career primary and secondary music teachers in China?
2. How do graduates from selected universities in Guizhou perform in terms of knowledge and skills within the context of their universities' preservice music teacher preparation programs?
3. How to map a framework that can help to align the universities' preservice music teacher preparation with the requirements of primary and secondary music teachers in China?

1.6 Scope of Study

The requirements for early-career music teachers to work in primary and secondary schools and their perceptions of how well the preservice education program has prepared them for their early teaching experiences in schools were explored in this study to structure a music education program framework. Based on Connelly and Clandinin (2001), exploring teacher perspectives in educational research is crucial for providing practical knowledge and a means of reconstructing the past and forming future intentions to address the exigencies of a situation. This research aimed to advance the understanding of preservice music teachers' knowledge and skills mastery by examining the graduates' knowledge and skills performance.

The nine-year compulsory education stage in China constitutes primary and junior high school. Meanwhile, junior and senior high school are collectively known as "middle schools" (Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China,

2006, revised). Both primary and middle school education fall under basic education. Students trained in preservice music education programs can choose to teach in primary or middle schools post-graduation following their capacity and employment opportunities (Duan, 2011; Song, 2010). In this study, early-career music teachers from both primary and middle schools were chosen as samples.

The current work required early-career music teachers in primary and secondary schools to consider the impact of their university experiences on professional and classroom practices in relation to their training before completing the questionnaire (Ghaith & Shaaban, 1999). In this vein, the study encourages teachers to engage in critical reflection to “modify and enhance their understanding of professional practice” (Yost et al., 2000).

Each participant contributes a novel set of experiences, routines, and personality views to the research. Rather than undermining the validity of their perspectives, individual opinions on the teaching requirements and performance offer key information to reform preservice music teacher education programs. The findings may have broader implications that extend beyond the research focus on music teachers in Guizhou, China, leading to further questions and areas that require in-depth research on preservice music teacher education in China.

This mixed-method design is categorised into stages 1 and 2. A questionnaire survey of early-career music teachers in primary and secondary schools was conducted in stage 1 (focusing on research RQ1 and RQ2). Questionnaires were disseminated to 398 music teachers having graduated from GZNU, GZEU, XNUN, and LNU between 2017 and 2021 to examine their perceptions of the teaching requirements and performance.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected early-career music teachers in primary and secondary schools in stage 2 (focusing on RQ 1 and RQ2). Specifically, 22 music teachers from the first phase were interviewed via semi-structured interview to complement the questionnaire results.

1.7 Significance of the Research

1.7.1 Theoretical Significance

The following aspects reflect the theoretical significance of this study:

Innovation and enrichment of methodology: The mixed-method design included quantitative research methods (questionnaires and semi-structured interviews) rather than solely relying on traditional macro-qualitative approaches. This method provides more multi-dimensional analytical perspectives for enriching the methodological system of music education in China.

A deep understanding of variable relationships: This study provides a thorough exploration of the variable relationships, including the correlation between preservice education preparation and the actual requirements for primary and secondary music teachers, using a quantitative approach to gauge the various influencing factors and their interactions in music education.

The construction and improvement of theoretical frameworks: This study proposed the development of a framework on the knowledge and skills that preservice music teachers must prepare for in line with the requirements of primary and secondary schools based on the questionnaire and interview. This framework provides

new building blocks for music education theory and a solid groundwork for future works.

1.7.2 Practical Significance

The following aspects reflect the practical significance of this study:

Improving the pertinence of preservice education: This research provides strong data support to initiate the adjustment of preservice music teacher education programs in universities by delineating the knowledge and skills performance of graduates from selected universities in Guizhou and aligning them with the actual requirements of music teachers in primary and secondary schools.

Guiding educational reform in universities: This study provides empirical support and guidelines for reforming music teacher education in universities. Following the study outcomes, preservice education can optimise their program settings in a targeted manner, improve education quality, and cultivate more music teachers who fulfil the requirements of music teachers in primary and secondary schools.

Assisting in the professional development of preservice music teachers: This study delineates the specific requirements and expectations of primary and secondary schools that must be met by preservice music teachers. This provides key information to clarify their career development direction, prepare in advance, and better adapt to and excel in music teaching in primary and secondary schools.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

The key terms used in this study are defined as follows:

Program: A series of instructions that direct the performance of a specific (or set of) operation(s) when fed into a computer. In this research, a program is defined as the preservice education training program designed for music teachers in primary and secondary schools.

Preservice education: This term refers to the formal university-level training and education provided to individuals aspiring to become primary and secondary school teachers before commencing their professional careers. It is also known as “teacher education” or “normal education” in China.

Primary and secondary music teachers: This term collectively implies music educators who teach in elementary (primary) schools and middle or high (secondary) schools. A primary or secondary music teacher is responsible for imparting musical knowledge and skills to students within these educational institutions.

University: A higher education institution that provides advanced learning in various study fields, typically to students who have completed their secondary education. In this context, a university denotes an establishment engaged in providing general undergraduate education, including preservice teacher training programs.

Knowledge: This term refers to the foundational and applied information, awareness, and understanding acquired through experience, study, or perception, which a music teacher requires to competently teach in primary and secondary schools.

Skills: Refers to the specific teaching abilities and techniques a music teacher must develop and use to perform a task or activity with proficiency and ease.

Competencies: The integrating of knowledge, skills, and abilities required to effectively perform a job or task. In this context, competencies constitute a holistic set of knowledge and skills that an early-career music teacher in primary and secondary schools must possess and develop.

1.9 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis contains five chapters. Chapter 1 presents the research background, problem statement, study objectives and questions, research significance, and definition of key terms.

In Chapter 2, the literature review of music education provides a contextual background and an overarching perspective on the evolution of music education in China. Studies on the music education systems in universities and primary and secondary schools are extensively reviewed to outline the structure and historical progression of music education in China. Essentially, this review highlighted a misalignment between the knowledge and skills imparted to preservice preparation and the early-career requirements of music teachers in primary and secondary schools. The state of preservice music education across different eras and in its present form is also denoted. Furthermore, this chapter establishes the theoretical and research framework in addition to providing operational definitions. Chapters 4 and 5 present additional topical literature reviews alongside relevant data presentations to enhance the comprehensiveness of the problem discussion.

Chapter 3 outlines the mixed-method methodologies, involving semi-structured interviews and questionnaires, to gather data on the importance and performance of skills and knowledge among early-career music teachers in primary and secondary schools. The objective lies in scrutinising their requirements and

investigating the knowledge and skill performance of graduates from selected universities in Guizhou within the context of their universities' preservice music teacher preparation programs. A robust model is developed based on prior research accomplishments. Furthermore, the selection criteria, quantity, timing, and content of the interview data are meticulously detailed in this chapter. To ensure a thorough preparation for research data collection, the development of the questionnaire and case selection are rigorously documented. Semi-structured interviews and questionnaires serve to gauge the importance and performance of knowledge and skills for early-career music teachers in primary and secondary education.

Chapter 4 presents the questionnaire and semi-structured interview findings and analysis. Notably, the questionnaire results are narrated and juxtaposed with those of the interview. These results are subjected to statistical analysis via SPSS and importance-performance analysis (IPA) to outline the importance and performance of skills and knowledge for early-career music teachers in primary and secondary schools. Meanwhile, the semi-structured interview results are processed with Excel and underwent content analysis. The outcomes derived from both approaches are showcased through tables, figures, and narratives and amalgamated to address the research problem. Lastly, a framework for preservice music teachers' knowledge and skills preparation was proposed following these findings and the research model to consider the requirements for early-career music teachers to work in primary and secondary schools.

Chapter 5 highlights the reasons contributing to the misalignment between preservice music teachers' preparation and the requirements for music teachers in primary and secondary schools, drawn from the questionnaire and interview data. In

addition, this chapter discusses the framework and offers recommendations for adjusting and restructuring the preservice music teacher program to align it closely with the requirements for music teachers to work in primary and secondary schools. Chapter 5 concludes with the study limitations and recommendations for future works.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a holistic overview of the recent development of music education in China, with emphasis on primary and secondary music education and preservice music teacher education since the end of the 19th century. The literature review highlights the current system and structure of music education in China to understand the current context of preservice music education, the existing standard and requirements for teachers in primary and secondary music education, and the preparation of preservice music teachers in different periods in China.

Recent works on this subject matter are also reviewed to gauge the latest achievements in China and worldwide. This analysis provides the theoretical basis for this research. In addition to providing operational definitions, this chapter presents the development of a theoretical and conceptual framework that informs the research objectives and methodologies.

2.2 Music Education in Modern China (1840-1949)

School music education has been known as the “Modern Chinese School Music Education” from the Opium War (1840) to the founding of the People’s Republic of China (1949). Notably, the emergence of “school songs” (学堂乐歌) at the beginning of the 20th century signalled the advancement of modern music education in China (Miao et al., 2012). The history of music in modern China can be divided into two distinct sections between 1840 and 1949: the first relates to music

education in primary and secondary schools, while the second pertains to the training of preservice music teachers.

2.2.1 Primary and Secondary Music Education in Modern China

The genesis of school music education in China marked the emergence of “school songs” (学堂乐歌) at the beginning of the 20th century. The evolution of these “school songs” (学堂乐歌) led to the introduction of modern school music education frameworks from Europe, America, and Japan, which guided China onto a systematised and standardised path (Miao et al., 2012). Many people who were passionate about music education, including young aspirants such as Shen Xingong (沈心工), Zeng Zhimin (曾志忞), Xiao Youmei (肖友梅), and Li Shutong (李叔同), ventured to Japan to further their studies. These scholars returned with deep insights into Western music and instrumental proficiency acquired in Japan. They lay the foundation for advancing modern music education in China by disseminating their knowledge across the nation. Unsurprisingly, many of them emerged as pioneers of music education in China (Xia, 2004).

The earliest music class was conducted in the Affiliated Primary School of Shanghai Nanyang Public School, China (上海南洋公学附属小学), in 1901 (Miao et al., 2012). During the 33rd year of Emperor Guangxu’s reign (1907), music was offered as an elective subject in elementary girls’ schools. The subject became mandatory in boys’ schools during the first year of Emperor Xuantong’s reign (1909), thus establishing the status of music in primary and secondary schools (Sun, 2004).

Cai Yuanpei's (蔡元培) educational policy was adopted by the Republic of China government in 1912 to promote the concurrent development of four aspects of education: morality, intelligence, physical education, and aesthetics. Aimed at fostering comprehensive development, this policy was then established as the national educational objective. Incorporating aesthetic education into the school's educational framework was a groundbreaking and innovative step in the history of education in China. Since then, music education has been firmly established as a key component of school education (Ma, 2001a).

The Ministry of Education of the Republic of China issued a decree in 1912, which stipulated the purpose, level, content, method, and class hours of music courses. Notably, 'singing' and 'musical songs' were listed as compulsory courses for primary and secondary schools (Miao et al., 2012). The educational circle called for reforming the old school system and establishing a new counterpart following the May 4th Movement (五四运动) in 1919 and the influence of American educators John Dewey and Meng Lu, who were lecturing in China. From the early 20th century to the May 4th New Culture Movement in 1919, approximately 40 types of primary and secondary music textbooks covering music songs, music theory, and methods of organ playing were published. With more than 1,300 school music songs, these textbooks contain a large collection of valuable material as a reference for future generations (Wu, 2011a).

The Ministry of Education of the Republic of China promulgated the "New Academic System Curriculum Standards Outline (新学制课程标准纲要)" in June 1923 for elementary and middle schools. The education department issued the "Primary School Music Curriculum Outline (1923) (小学音乐课程纲要 (1923))" and

the “Junior High School Music Curriculum Outline (1923) (*初级中学音乐课程纲要 (1923)*)” In the same year. Both the curriculum outlines are the earliest regulations involving music teaching curriculum standards and educational implemented in primary and secondary schools in China (Miao et al., 2012).

Much emphasis is placed on the music teaching objective, teaching contents, teaching methodology, and the minimum requirements for graduates. Designated as one of the compulsory subjects for each academic year, music education (uniformly referred to as “music”) was also stipulated. These guidelines facilitate the theoretical development of modern general music education in China (Sun & Zhou, 2012).

The Ministry of Education of the National Government of the Republic of China (*国民政府*) issued a set of principles and corresponding measures for music education in primary and secondary schools in the early 1930s, followed by the “Primary School Music Curriculum Standards (1932) (*小学音乐课程标准 (1932)*)”, the “Junior High School Music Curriculum Standards (1932) (*初级中学音乐课程标准 (1932)*)”, and the “Senior High School Music Curriculum Standards (1932) (*高级中学音乐课程标准 (1932)*)”.

This unified curriculum standard was applied nationwide with clear teaching objectives and specific requirements set for teaching music knowledge, training musical skills, cultivating music appreciation, and nurturing feelings for optimal teaching quality (Wu, 2011a). Regardless, these standards were ineffectively implemented due to highly complex content and poor implementation conditions (Miao et al., 2012).

The War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (*抗日战争*), which began in 1937, marked a new historical phase for music education in primary and secondary schools. The regulations issued by the Educational Authorities in the Liberated Regions (*解放区教育部门*) for elementary schools in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region (*陕甘宁边区*) in 1939 outlined three music lessons per week for grades 1-3 and two music lessons per week for grades 4-5, with some corresponding adjustments subsequently made. Shanxi, Cha-Hebei, Shandong, Central China, and other revolutionary grassroots areas have since developed various implementation methods and regulations for primary and secondary-level music education (Chen & Chen, 2006).

Extended from the junior and senior high school music curriculum standards developed in 1932, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of China issued the Revised Junior High School Music Curriculum Standards (1940) (*修正初级中学音乐课程标准(1940)*) and the Revised Senior High School Music Curriculum Standards (1940) (*修正高级中学音乐课程标准(1940)*) in September 1940. Based on these standards, junior high school students must receive two hours of music instruction per week. Teaching materials should be regularly and reasonably rotated and allocated, respectively, across three areas (singing, music theory, and music appreciation) during these hours. For senior high school students, the first and second academic years each entailed one hour of music instruction per week. Teaching materials should also be diverse and appropriately allocated between vocal music and music appreciation during this time.

Anti-Japanese singing activities were performed in the areas under Kuomintang rule (*国民党统治区*), with a series of new music textbooks produced for

primary and secondary schools to support the development of music teaching in primary and secondary schools. Nevertheless, the lack of professional music teachers and courses remain prevalent in primary and secondary schools (Chen & Chen, 2006).

Music education in China underwent various periods, including “School Songs (学堂乐歌),” the May Fourth Movement (五四运动) and the War of Resistance against Japan (抗日战争) from the beginning of the 20th century until the establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949. Political unrest, frequent changes to the curriculum of primary and secondary school music education, an incompetent teaching force, and the incongruent development between regions, urban and rural areas, and individual schools characterised this tumultuous period. Despite the volatilities in primary and secondary school music education, the concerted efforts of several generations of music educators laid a solid foundation for the development of music education in China.

2.2.2 Preservice Music Teacher Education in Modern China

Modern preservice music teacher education in China dates back to the establishment of the Shanghai Nanyang Public Normal School (上海南洋公立师范学校) in 1897, marking an early effort in music education. In 1907, the Qing Dynasty’s issuance of the Constitution of Normal Schools for Women (女子师范学校章程) led to the formalisation of music education in the normal school system (Wu, 2011a). This development is a crucial milestone in the history of music teacher education in China.

The early 20th century witnessed the development of secondary normal music education in China. Founded in Fuzhou, Fujian Province, in 1903, the Quanmin Normal School (全闽师范学堂) was one of the first educational establishments established in the late Qing Dynasty. The school, which introduced a one-year music course in 1906, became a pioneer in music education among normal secondary schools in China (Gong, L., 2010).

A specialised training program in musical gymnastics was established in 1907 to address the shortage of primary school music and physical education teachers in Baoding (河北省保定), Hebei Province, and prepare teachers for these fields (Wu, 2011). The government of the Republic of China (中华民国政府) issued the Normal Education Order (师范教育令) and the Regulations of Normal Schools (师范学校规程) in 1912 to specify the educational purpose, admission requirements, and teaching content of normal schools, including detailed provisions on the purpose, learning content, and opening hours of music lessons. These regulations set a significant milestone in setting the direction for normal music education development in China (Wu, 2011).

The School System Reform Order (学校系统改革令) was introduced a decade later (1922), rendering music a compulsory subject in normal schools spanning six years (Wu, 2011a). Upon undergoing several key revisions, the Normal Schools Ordinance of 1933 (师范学校规程) stipulated that music be offered as a major subject in normal secondary schools (Wu, 2011a).

Both the “Simple Normal School (简易师范学校)” and the “Simple Rural Normal School (简易乡村师范学校)” regulations prioritised music as one of the