

Study on the Music Teaching of Left-behind Children in the Countryside Nowadays

-- Taking Shantang Primary School in Shantang Village, Huangpi Town, Ganzhou City, Jiangxi Province as an Example

Yu Xiong^{1, a}

¹School of Jiangxi Normal University, Jiangxi 330022, China

^a447814707@qq.com

Abstract

Left-behind children is a new phenomenon emerging in the process of urbanization in China, due to a large number of rural surplus labor force constantly pouring into big cities. Thus the number of left-behind children are rapidly growing and make it the hottest social issues. And problems like emotional "hungry" and other psychological problems brought by the left-behind children education, are also gradually become prominent. Music education plays an important role in the psychological adjustment of left-behind children, which cannot be ignored or exaggerated. Music education provides a safe environment for left-behind children to open up and expose their innermost feelings and even privacy. In this environment, left-behind children can form a dynamic relationship of mutual support, understanding and confiding with their companion and teachers in collective music activities. However, There still exists a certain gap between urban and rural music education, and kids at this age coincides with a desire for music. The rural primary school students cannot be deprived from too much music education because of regional differences. To make music gradually become an integral part in rural left-behind students' life and music education has become an important approach for education department to develop students' comprehensive quality. Under the constant implementation of the new curriculum standard in our country, the society also began to attach importance to music education. Schools look for opportunities to exercise themselves, to meet the requirements of their communication, self-expression, promoting their physical and mental development in rehearsing in the various types of learning and creative activities.

Keywords

Left-behind children; Rural primary schools; Music education; Mental health.

1. PREFACE

Music Education has a long history and it records the progress of mankind, describes the wisdom of mankind, breaks the silence of the times, and shapes a perfect personality. From the very beginning, the modern music education in China advocated that music should be an important subject of "reforming the quality of the people" and "spiritual education". The Soviet educator Kabalevsky stressed that music education "is not to train musicians, but first to train people"; Suzuki of Japan said that "teaching music is not my main purpose, I want to make good citizens". Marxism believes that music education is a reflection of human life, it will promote the harmonious development of personality, the combination of human intelligence and the

spirit. The Music Education has the inestimable function to a person's sense of worth and irreplaceable function to the enhancement of national quality, which is irreplaceable by other disciplines.

There is a serious shortage of teachers, unreasonable arrangement of teachers and incomplete curriculum in rural primary schools in China. The present situation of primary education in rural areas directly reflects the urgency of training general teachers, and it is worth studying how to train and achieve the goal of music subject in training general teachers in rural primary schools. Through the analysis of the current situation of the music education in Shantang Primary School, it is helpful for us to understand the music education in remote rural areas and promote the implementation of the national policy.

2. RESEARCH METHODS AND SUBJECTS

2.1. Research Subjects

The present situation of music teaching in Shantang Primary School in Huangpo town, Ningdu County, Jiangxi Province, was studied, and the students in Huangpo town, Ningdu County, Ganzhou, Jiangxi Province, were investigated.

2.2. Research Methods

1. Bibliographic Method

The articles in CNKI, the Global Academic Express, and other social media like Chinese Journal Network can be read and analyzed.

2. Questionnaire

(1) Validity and Reliability of Questionnaire

The content validity of the paper has been tested. The results show that the questionnaire meets the purposes and tasks of the investigation and the needs of the research. The reliability of the questionnaires has been tested by reissuing and retracting the questionnaire after 20 days' interval. The results of the two questionnaires were systematically processed to prove that the survey was reliable.

(2) Questionnaire Distribution and Recall

Table 1. Distribution and Recovery rates of questionnaires24/5000

Distribution Nubmer	Male(N)	Female(N)	Recovery Number(N)	Recovery Number(%)	Effective Number(N)	Effective Rate (%)
150	85	65	144	96%	139	92.66%

During the survey, 150 questionnaires were distributed to students from Grade 3 to Grade 6 of Shantang primary school in Huangpi town, Ningdu County, Jiangxi Province, and 144 questionnaires were recollected. The recovery rate was 96% and the effective rate was 92.66%. In order to ensure the authenticity and effectiveness of the questionnaire, they are distributed and recollected at the same place.

3. Mathematical statistics:

The data from the questionnaire were sorted by Microsoft Excel 2003.

4. Observation method:

During the author's internship at Shantang primary school in Huangpi town, Ningdu County, Jiangxi Province, students were observed and recorded during their music lessons.

3. RESEARCH METHODS AND ANALYSIS

The situation of questionnaire are listed below:

3.1. Investigation and Analysis on the Sex of the Students in Shantang Primary School

Table 2. Distribution of respondents by sex (N = 139)

Sex	Male	Female
Population(N)	74	65
Percentage(%)	53.23%	46.76%

3.2. Investigation and Analysis of Students' Interest in Music Class in Shantang Primary School

Table 3. Investigation and analysis of students' interest in music lessons in Shantang Primary School (N = 139)

Content	Male	Female	Total	Percentage	Order
Very interested	38	48	86	61.87%	1
Comparatively interested	19	12	31	22.3%	2
Generally interested	10	3	13	9.35%	3
Not interested	7	2	9	6.47%	4

From Table 3, it can be seen that 86 people are very interested in music lessons, accounting for 61.87% of the total, 31 people are comparatively interested, accounting for 22.3%, 13 people are generally interested, accounting for 9.35%, and 9 people are not interested, accounting for 6.47%. Overall, 61.87 percent of the students at Shantang Primary School were interested in music lessons, while only 6.47 percent were not, with boys making up the majority. In the course development, we should arrange the course reasonably, the teachers should pay attention to the gender difference, and we should fully arouse the enthusiasm of the students, let the students participate in it actively, and become the main body of the music course.

3.3. Investigation and Analysis on the Degree of Like of the Students to the Music Teacher in Shantang Primary School

Table 4. Investigation and analysis on the degree of like of the students to the music teacher in Shantang Primary School (N=139)

Content	Male	Female	Total	Percentage	Order
Very like	39	50	89	64.02%	1
Comparatively like	23	11	34	24.46%	2
Generally like	10	3	13	9.35%	3
Not like	2	1	3	2.15%	4

From the analysis of Table 4, it can be seen that the students like the music teacher very much is the first place. There are 89 students, accounting for 64.02% of the total number; comparatively like is the second place. There are 34 students, accounting for 24.46% of the total number; There were 13, or 9.35% of the total, and three, or 2.15% or the students showing their dislike for the teacher. As can be seen from table 4, the students of Shantang primary school are very interested in music lessons, and the music teacher is very popular among the students. Facing student's high enthusiasm, and their affection to the music teacher, teachers should

guide the student to form the correct music consciousness and the music attitude in order to actively and effectively assist the smooth development of music courses.

3.4. Investigation and Analysis on the Professional Level of Music Teachers in Shantang Primary School

Table 5. Investigation and analysis on the professional level of music teachers in Shantang Primary School (N=139)

Content	Population(N)	Percentage(%)	Order
Very Professional	12	8.63%	3
Comparatively Professional	21	15.1%	2
Generally Professional	12	8.63%	3
Not Professional	94	67.62%	1

From the survey of the professional level of the music teachers in Shantang Primary School, it can be seen that there are 12 people who think the music teachers are very professional, accounting for only 8.63%, ranking third, and 21 people who think the music teachers are relatively professional, accounting for 15.1% , ranking second. In general, 12(8.63%) thought that music teachers were generally professional, and 94(67.62%) thought that music teachers were not professional. Thus, unprofessional music teachers accounted for more than half. Today's society attaches great importance to quality education, and our music teachers should keep up with the times, improving their professional quality and keeping up with the modern quality education.

3.5. Investigation and Analysis on the Importance of Music Class in Shantang Primary School

Table 6. Investigation and analysis on the importance of music class in Shantang Primary School(N=139)

Content	Population(N)	Percentage(%)	Order
Very Important	3	2.16%	4
Comparatively Important	5	3.60%	3
Generally Important	20	14.39%	2
Not Important	111	79.86%	1

Table 6 shows that only 3(2.16%) of the students of Shantang Primary School thought that their teachers attached great importance to music lessons; only 5(3.60%) of the students took music lessons seriously; 20(14.39%) of the students generally took music lessons seriously; and 111(111) of the students did not take music lessons seriously, 79.86% . Nearly 80% of the teachers do not attach importance to the music class, which shows that most of the factors that affect the development of the music class come from the importance attached to the music class by the teachers, which affects the efficiency of the class, and leads to the difficulty of the music class teaching.

3.6. An Investigation and Analysis of the Motivation of the Students in the Music Class in Shantang Primary School

Table 7 shows that 66 of the students in Shantang Primary School thought that music lessons were for learning music knowledge, accounting for 47.48% of the total, and 34 of them thought that music lessons were fun, accounting for 24.46% of the total. There were 28 students (20.14%) who thought music lessons were for listening to music, and only 11 students (7.91%)

who thought music lessons were for listening to music only. So 92.08% of the students think it is very important to have music lessons. Only a few people do not have the concept of music lessons. Students' high music awareness is highly commendable. Interest is the best teacher, we should seize the interest of students, and actively carry out music lessons, so that students can get all-round development.

Table 7. An investigation and analysis of the motivation of the students in the music class in Shantang primary school(N=139)

Content	Population(N)	Percentage(%)	Order
For learning music knowledge	66	47.48%	1
For fun	34	24.46%	2
For listening to music	28	20.14%	3
For having class	11	7.91%	4

3.7. Investigation and Analysis on the Present Situation of Music Teaching in Shantang Primary School

Table 8. Investigation and analysis on the present situation of music teaching in Shantang Primary School (Multiple choice N=263)

Content	Population(N)	Percentage(%)	Order
Self-study	108	41.06%	1
Free activity	67	25.47%	2
Doing music games	63	23.95%	3
Teaching music skills	25	9.5%	4

Table 9 reflects the present situation of music teaching in Shantang Primary School. The percentage of self-study is 41.06%, free activity is 25.47% , doing music games is 23.95%, and teaching music skills is 9.5% . Only 33.45 percent of the students actually took music lessons, less than half of them. Self-study and Free activity have a high proportion. The main factors come from that teachers teach class randomly, do not attach importance to music class and limited professional level. Teachers have to take such a way to teach class. Students believe that the way of teaching music skills needs professional knowledge of music to support. All kinds of problems in the present situation of music teaching must be paid attention to and then improved.

3.8. An Investigation and Analysis of the Factors for the Unsuccessful Development of Music Class in Shantang Primary School42/5000

Table 9. An investigation and analysis of the factors for the unsuccessful development of music class in Shantang primary school (Multiple choice N=280)

Content	Population(N)	Percentage(%)	Order
Inadequate space and equipment	133	47.5%	1
Too much homework	108	38.57%	2
Boring class	29	10.35%	3
Dislike for the teacher	10	3.57%	4

Table 8 shows that inadequate space and too much homework accounted for 47.5% and 38.57% of the factors for the unsuccessful development of music lessons; the reason because the music lessons are boring accounted for 10.35% of the total; and dislike of the music teachers, 3.57% .

From this table, we can see that the biggest factor affecting the unsuccessful development of music lessons is the equipment factor, which shows that the school needs to improve the basic infrastructure. The proportion because of too much homework is also quite high, which is an urgent problem for schools, head teachers and music teachers to solve. The reason of boring class and dislike for music teachers accounted for a small proportion of factors, so that music teachers in class should always observe students' reaction in time to adjust the way of teaching class to improve students' interest in class. Faced with this situation, the school should increase the input of equipment, reasonably allocate the time so that students can be fully engaged in music lessons.

4. SOLUTIONS

4.1. A Professional Teaching

Considering the fact that Shantang primary school does not have a professional music teacher, the ignorance of music class, inadequate space and equipment and so on, during my teaching, I decided to use the existing resources to bring the children of Shantang primary school a truly professional music course for the first time since the school was founded.

4.2. Designing Teaching Plan

When I came to Shantang Primary School for the first time, the first thing I did was to communicate with the principal, the head teacher and the teachers in charge of the class, hoping that they would attach importance to the music class and support the development of the music class, not occupy the music class time. After gaining the strong support of the principal and teachers, and after talking with the children, I learned that before I came to Shantang primary school, the children here had never had a systematic music lesson or even almost never had a music lesson. The children in the first and sixth grades knew almost nothing about the basics of music, so I was completely unable to follow the music textbooks for each grade, so I gave up and had designed a teaching plan of my own.

4.3. Content and Practice of the Teaching Plan

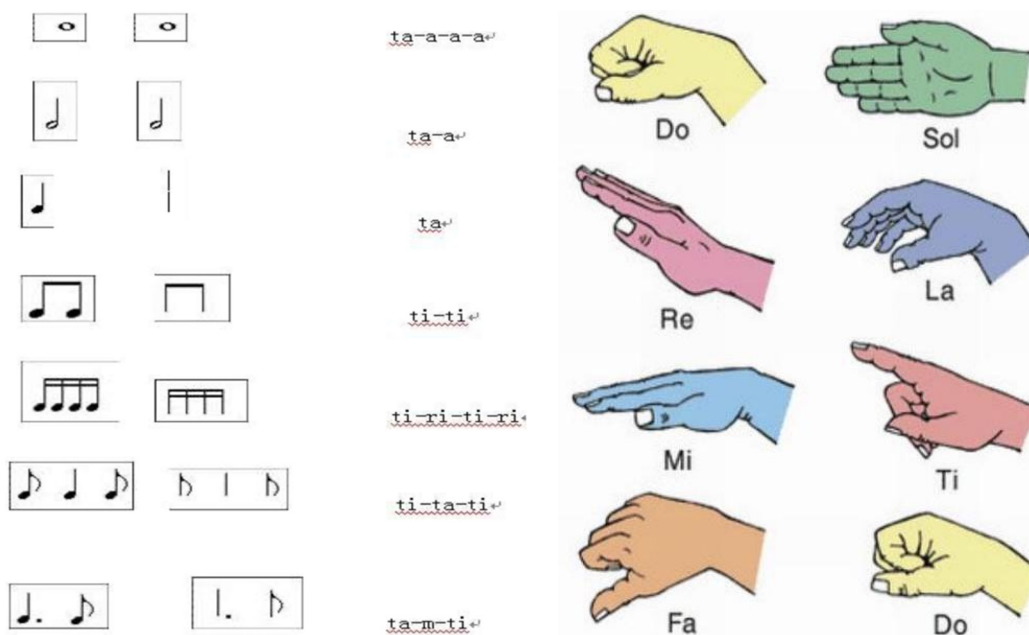


Figure 1. Kodaly rhythm training

The teaching plan combines the teaching methods of Orff, Kodaly, and Colbún gestures, enabling children to acquire a basic knowledge of music in a short period of time on the basis of happy learning. I then spent the next two weeks trying out and improving the program in each grade. When the program was first tried out, all students in the school were taught Colbún gestures (figure 1) and Zoltán Kodály's rhythm training (figure 1). Colbún gestures allow students to learn, memorize pitch concepts and read music more quickly with the help of their limbs. Zoltán Kodály's rhythm training in different rhythm corresponding to the different pronunciation helps students have a more accurate understanding of the basic rhythm. The basic rhythmic training is based on the lively and active characteristics of primary school students. I chose to use the ORFF teaching method and asked them to imitate the teacher's body movements, such as stomping, clapping their hands, patting their shoulders, etc. Students can learn the basic rhythm through body movements. I then spent the next two weeks trying it out and improving it simultaneously in every class. After six weeks of testing the program, the younger children learned the simple musical knowledge of Colbún gestures, notation, and fours and Hachi.

The middle-aged and older children not only learned the Colbún gestures, but also notation, they also learned slightly more complex rhythmic patterns such as large attachments, small attachments, and even syncopation. After they have mastered the basic ability to read music score, I have left one or two musical text every week to exercise their ability to read music score. After a period of training, the children's ability to read music score has greatly improved. After that, I have taught some songs in the class. In the process of teaching, I introduced some simple music knowledge such as connecting notes, Fermata lines, strong and weak marks, and time stamp.

4.4. Opening Music Extracurricular Class

In order to let the children who love music and have musical talent to learn more music knowledge, I set up a music extracurricular class. Because there is no special venue, music extracurricular class is set in the cafeteria. In order to solve the equipment problem, I use piano software in mobile phone to play the melody through the amplifier to amplify the sound so that the children can follow as accurate as possible. In the music extracurricular class, I taught the children the correct way to breathe and sound when singing. After that, the children who love music learned to sing songs such as "Song of Wanderers" , "Treading the Waves" , "Bloom of Happy Flowers" , "Wishing We Last Forever" and so on. In order to let the students of music extracurricular class have a comprehensive development, the school purchased a batch of clarinet for the use of students after the communication with the principal. Given that the clarinet is for public use and will continue to be used, the first thing I taught my children after I got it was how to maintain and pay attention to personal hygiene. After a period of hard work they were able to play simple melodies with the clarinet.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1. Conclusions

1. The gender difference in the music lesson of Shantang Primary School is not big, The male-female ratio is relatively balanced.
2. In shantang primary school, 93.52% of the students are interested in music lessons, while 6.47% are not. Music lessons are very popular among the students.
3. In shantang primary school, 97.85% of the students like the music teacher, 2.15% of the students do not like the music teacher, music teacher is very popular among the students.
4. Only 8.63% of the students think the music teacher is very professional and 67.62% of the students think the music teacher is not professional.

5. Shantang primary school attaches very little importance to music lessons.

6. Musical instruments and venues are a major factor affecting the development of music lessons.

5.2. Suggestions

1. During the development of the music course, we music teachers should pay attention to the individual differences between male and female students, and arrange the course content reasonably.

2. Teachers should attach more importance to music lessons in primary schools, make good use of the advantages of music lessons, and then effectively care for left-behind children's psychology.

In shantang primary school, the proportion of left-behind children is as high as over 70%. Their parents are forced to live far from home and their young children. The children's parents go out to work, to obtain family income with hard-working hands, to contribute to economic development and social stability, but the children are forced to stay at home in the countryside. The left-behind children are in the critical period of growth and development in physiology and psychology. They can not enjoy the care and love from their parents. Children tend to become introverted, withdrawn and even depressed. These psychological problems will directly affect the behavior of left-behind children. As a professional music teacher who came to the countryside to offer voluntary education, I believe that flexible use of a variety of musical forms in a music class is a good way to subtly adjust children's emotions and by using different musical emotions to release or even eliminate negative emotions, students will become more optimistic, upbeat, and energetic.

3. Government should strengthen the construction of music teachers in primary schools and improve the quality of music teaching in primary schools.

According to the investigation and research of Shantang Primary School, there is no professional music teacher and no systematic class, which seriously affects the quality of class. Faced with such a situation, local departments should attach great importance to it and take effective measures to increase the number of professional music teachers in schools, carry out special training for music teachers, strengthen their professional knowledge and improve their teaching level. The quality of music teaching in primary schools can be improved only by strengthening the teaching staff.

4. The teachers should strengthen the input of music teaching in primary school and cultivate the music consciousness of primary school students

Students are the main body of learning. Of course, they are also the main body of learning music. According to the research, 93.52% of the students in Shantang Primary School are interested in music lessons, and they also like the music teacher very much. Therefore, only by letting the students actively participate in music learning, they can experience the fun. Therefore, schools should make great efforts to improve the teaching quality and teaching environment of students. Encouraging students to participate in their favorite music extracurricular class can effectively cultivate the music literacy of primary school students.

5. Schools should increase financial input to improve the necessary facilities for music classes, and vigorously support the development of music classes.

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