Proposed Guidelines for Developing Music Teaching and Learning Management in the Higher Education System in Yangon, Myanmar

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this qualitative study were 1) to study the status and challenges of music teaching and learning management in the 3 selected institutions in the Yangon area of Myanmar and 2) to obtain guidelines for developing the music teaching and learning management in the 3 selected institutions in the Yangon area of Myanmar. Purposive sampling was used to select 19 participants. The data was gathered in three phases: 1) semi-structured interviews and non-participant observations with 3 department heads and 11 music instructors; 2) focus group discussion I with 6 instructors from phase one; and 3) focus group discussion II with 5 music educators from different universities. The data was analyzed using the content analysis method.

The findings revealed that Myanmar is still needed basic music education knowledge and development processes in all areas. To improve the music education needs corporation between each part of the organization from government to the university. The administrators should have responsibility and supportiveness for an effective teaching and learning management, provides workshop or teacher's trainings, and manage or offer the basic courses training and examination for music students.

Keywords: Music teaching and learning management, Myanmar's higher education, Western music teaching

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Introduction

In higher education, teaching and learning is based on the nature of knowledge and conceptual understanding of the students during their degree course. The value of higher education needs to be focused on the students' development skills, attitudes, knowledge and understanding. It is the effective preparation part for life in the 21st century and the beginning to the specific profession in the working area [1] The university is the place which provides the new ideas, creative mind, new realities, and foundation of the professional knowledge and skills [2].

According to History, Western music gained much popularity in Myanmar in the 1930s, and music teaching and learning systems were introduced by the Christian society beforehand. After Myanmar achieved independence from the British in 1947, most of the British education structure remained. Without regard to their own religion, most Burmese middle-class families chose to educate their children in the schools run by Catholics, Methodists, and Baptists where in the staff were the Burmese people who had graduated from British educational institutions. Although music was not actually included as a subject in the school curriculum, many schools sang Christian hymns. Further at that time these schools attempted to introduce music education into the school curriculum, but these attempts were forcibly rejected. However, Church music remained popular and was especially developed among the Karen ethnic group [1]. In the past, Myanmar had better education systems in Southeast Asia countries. Conversely, the education system is one of the present challenges for the country. Despite Myanmar's transformation from military dictatorship to democratic country, the result of more than 50 years of military rule, the basic structure of the country is poor. The education system is in a very weakened state. There has not been much progress in teaching methods. Teachers in both schools and universities have received little encouragement for professional development [2].

Decades of underinvestment and civil strife over 70 years resulted in the slow and steady decay of Myanmar's state education system. In 1964 under the socialist regime, all private schools and universities were closed. After the students' protest of 1988, all universities were closed for two years. Another series of student strikes in 1996 and 1998 resulted in further closures. In Yangon, the university was closed for 10 out of 12 years. After the reopening of universities and colleges in 1999, the government relocated universities to different regions and the undergraduate programs were moved to campuses far away from urban centers to avoid further student protests. This extreme version of domestic and international isolation means that the quality of higher education has slopped to dramatically low levels and reforming universities has become a government priority since the country started to open again after the 2010 elections. There are 171 higher education institutions in Myanmar. All of them are under the control of eight different ministries. Higher education institutions accept the students to study depending on their grades, which they get from their matriculation examination [3]. Myanmar's universities are very different from other higher education systems in the world. Everything is deeply centralized and there is almost no autonomy in the universities [4]. Currently, there are three

main institutions in Yangon, Myanmar that provide bachelor's degrees in music, diplomas in music or certificates in music. These three are the main institutions which upskill musicians from all over the country, not only in church music but also in secular music. In this research, the researcher hides the name of the three main institutions according to their confidential facts.

According to the searching for related research, some of them studied teaching theory in private lessons [5] awareness of teachers about the concept of teaching and learning [6], University Entrance Examination [7]. There were a few research that studies in Yangon, Myanmar area that are about the status and problems of western vocal music teaching in Myanmar [8], the exploring of piano pedagogy, and the current status of elementary music education [9]. However, much information about the music education system, background, and details about the processes of music teaching and learning management in the higher education system in Myanmar are still unrevealed. In the modern world, higher education is facing a variety of challenges. It is needed to research and explore effective teaching and learning methods. Therefore, the researcher interested to explore the current situation, status, and challenges in the study area, and propose the guidelines of how to do development and enhancement in the music education system in Yangon, Myanmar. It will be beneficial for developing the music education system in the country as well as giving guidance to the future researchers.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the status and challenges of music teaching and learning management in the 3 selected institutions in the Yangon area of Myanmar.
2. To obtain guidelines for developing the music teaching and learning management in the 3 selected institutions in the Yangon area of Myanmar.

Methodology

This study is qualitative research. The researcher conducted this research in the Yangon area where musicians can pursue higher degrees in music at the university level, as well as the opportunities are much better than in the other cities. 3 institutions in Yangon, Myanmar are selected with these criteria 1) the most famous institutions, 2) have been established for more than 10 years, 3) provides certificate, diploma programs, and bachelor's degrees in music, and 4) have numbers of graduated students.

1. Key Informants

The key informants were selected by purposive sampling and divided into 3 groups for 3 phrases as follows.

Group 1: 3 department heads and 11 music instructors who are at least a bachelor's degree in music and more than 3 years of music teaching experience from 3 selected institutions in Yangon, Myanmar. This group of key informants are for the purpose of gaining status, challenges, and some guidelines for developing music teaching and learning management in the 3 selected institutions.

Group 2: 6 music instructors from group 1 who are currently teaching in the 3 selected institutions, have at least 3 years of experiences, and hold the master's degree in music. This group of key informants was formed in order to reach a consensus on guidelines for developing music teaching and learning management in the 3 selected institutions.

Group 3: 5 music educators from various universities with more than 5 years of higher education teaching experience, experience serving on a higher education curriculum committee, and being frequently invited as experts for academic works in higher education. This group of key informants was formed in order to reach the final guidelines for developing the music teaching and learning management in the 3 selected institutions in the Yangon area of Myanmar.

2. Research Instruments

There are four research instruments: 1) a semi-structured interview form, 2) a non-participant observation form, 3) focus group I guideline questions, and 4) focus group II guideline questions. The research tools primarily concentrate on 5 aspects of music teaching and learning management, which are as follows: 1) administration; administrator, school, and colleague, 2. Teacher, 3. Student, 4. teaching and learning; teaching objectives, content/curriculum, teaching method/process, teaching materials and assessment, 5) environment. The procedures for developing research instruments are as follows: 1) study related documents and theories, 2) scope the issues and contents, 3) indicate the structure and questions of research instruments, 4) verify the quality of the research tools by advisors and content validity by 3 experts, then revise; 5) pilot study (pre-interview for research tools) and revise; and 6) collect data.

3. Data Analysis

In this research, Data Analysis was conducted using the method of "Content Analysis". The researcher used content analysis for finding the purposes, messages, and the effects of communication content. The researcher interviewed the participants, made audio recordings, and took notes during the interview with the permission of the informants, then transcripts were written out after the audio recording. Interview data was analyzed to detect the similarities and differences of the individuals and documents then transcribed into documentary forms. The interviews emphasized the current situation of the teaching method used in the respective organizations. Moreover, the researcher focused on the problems and limitations of the teaching and learning process.

Results of Research

The findings are presented in 2 parts 1) Current situation which presents the overview of the challenges and improvement guidelines, 2) The status, challenges guidelines for developing of music teaching and learning management in the 3 selected institutions in the Yangon area of Myanmar. Content analysis was used to examine data on each of the five components of music teaching and learning management: 1) administration: administrators, school, and colleagues; 2) teacher; 3) student; 4) teaching

and learning: teaching objective, content/curriculum, teaching method/process, teaching materials, assessment; and 5) environment.

Part 1: Current Situation

The researcher discovered that the current situation in Myanmar is a lack of basic music education knowledge. It contains the following topics: 1) The minimal level of education and learning in Western music. 2) The students were not exposed to music at a young age. 3) The minimal level of parental support for music education. 4) The substandard of musical background of the general students. 5) Unrestricted and unstandardized of university's admissions exam.

Improving music education necessitates collaboration among all levels of government, from policymakers to universities that educate citizens. This guideline is organized around the role of people in the educational system. Myanmar's people should have a general understanding of music education. If people value music, there will always be a need for the best method of music teaching and learning. Firstly, government organizations in regional administration units should provide music teachers with intensive musical supervision in teaching and learning music. Secondly, the university can set up the summer camp every year, and the students will have gained enough ability to take the university entrance exam in two or three years later. Furthermore, institutions should have a radio program, a television program, or an announcement about the musical seminar so that the general public is aware that they will be invited to participate in the general seminar. Thirdly, it is the responsibility of university administrators or music supervisors to organize the training seminar or workshop for music teachers. Finally, the basic education curriculum should include mandatory music courses for young students to gain general knowledge.

Part 2: The status, challenges, and guidelines for developing of music teaching and learning management in the 3 selected institutions in the Yangon area of Myanmar

The teaching and learning are made up of five components, which are as follows: 1) Administration: Administrator, school, and colleague 2) Teachers 3) Students 4) Teaching and Learning: Teaching Objectives, Content/ Curriculum, Method/ Process, and Assessment and Evaluation, and 5) Environment.

1) Administration: Administrator, school, and colleague

The researcher discovered the following non-collaborative between administration and music department such as administration management is unsystematic, the ad hoc curriculum processes, the administrators have inadequate musical knowledge, there is no interaction between teachers and administrators, there is no collaboration between teachers, and the administrators provide subjects that the instructors do not have sufficient knowledge to teach. As a result, teachers are overloaded in their teaching areas, and this will have an impact on the curriculum's standard.

Each institution highly depends on administration. The administration should be taken fully responsibility and support an effective teaching and learning management system. Furthermore, administrators should understand how to offer courses in music subjects based on the philosophy of their respective institutions. The institutions must first establish the standards and expectations, then

hire teachers who are qualified for the positions. If the administrators lack musical knowledge, they must work with music teachers to develop strategies that meet the needs of each music class.

2) Teachers

The researcher discovered insufficient musical knowledge in teachers, such as qualifications, teaching methods, classroom management, and teacher's skills. It found out that most music teachers do not have enough experienced. At this point, teachers' knowledge need to be improved, there are some challenges and difficulties in teaching methods, there is also a clear need to improve teachers' pedagogical and technical music skills, the difficulties of teaching traditional Burmese music and Western music at the same time, the difficulties of teaching different levels of students in the same class at the same time, the unbalanced teacher-student ratio, the teachers are unable to adhere to the academic calendar, teachers must be well prepared for their lessons, and the significance of teaching analytical skills and articulations are needed.

To improve the teacher part; the administrators should take the responsibility for conducting workshops or music teacher trainings for teachers in order to improve their potentials. In addition, each institution's subjects should be adjusted and improved in accordance with the school academic year calendar. Teachers should be trained how to select effective strategies for gaining students' cognitive development. Furthermore, teachers and administrators must assemble a committee. Then, discuss the music department's needs with the administrators.

3) Students

The researcher discovered about the student weaknesses, difficulties, and insufficient ability and skills to attend the western music. There are many challenges revealed; the different levels of musical ability among students, have problems in aural skills, performing problems, physical and practicing, inconsistency between practice time and academic subjects (e.g. English, Mathematics, Science, etc.,.), the difficulties for the students to learn both Traditional Music and Western Music, changing the major instruments to another during the school year, students' familiarity with the unplanned music education system, and do not have much to explore the classical concert.

Specifying the musical abilities of the students to ensure that they have sufficient musical skills and theory knowledge to continue their education in higher level, they should have musical skills and knowledge equivalent to at least Trinity College London grade 4. It is equivalent to the following:

1. The idea behind supertonic, subdominant, and dominant seventh chords (labelling in both Roman numeral and chord symbol)
2. With an understanding of parallel octaves and fifths, students can write a tune or bass line to a given chord progression.
3. Students can transpose and recognize forms and cadences.
4. Students will have the ability to read and write in alto and tenor clefs.

5. Students can demonstrate their vocal range as well as their knowledge of a variety of instruments.

If students do not meet the above requirements, institutions should provide basic courses, theory, and private classes outside of working hours or at the weekends, to bring basic knowledge and skills up to a satisfactory level before entering the first year. Provide an examination to test musical ability for high school students in their final year who need to fulfill their own musical ability. This strategy would assist students in being well-prepared for music college or university. For all those strategies which are mentioned above would assist institutions in acquiring high competency students as prospective first-year students.

4) Teaching and Learning

According to the data collection, the researcher discovered the following: a lack of resources for the new curriculum such as teaching objective, content/curriculum, teaching method/process, teaching materials, and assessment and evaluation.

4.1) Teaching Objective

The researcher discovered that some teachers and institutions do not have their own course syllabus. However, most of the teachers followed their main curriculum but do not have individual course syllabus for their own teaching subjects.

The teachers should concern more about this part because course syllabi and assignments are essential for developing or improving teaching and learning activities.

Teaching objectives can be used as an instructional tool to create meaningful assignments and an instructional design element that can precede a learning unit.

4.2) Content/ Curriculum

It discovered numerous challenges and difficulties in the curriculum at all 3 institutions. The subjects offered by each institution are influenced by different religions and cultures. Furthermore, the key informants discussed some processes in their own curriculum as well as the curriculum's strengths and weaknesses such as there are extra curriculum only for foreign Teachers is not part of the official curriculum, there are difficulties for changing situations and curricula, the restriction curriculum development**,** the difficulties to making a new curriculum book, the curriculum's flaws and deficiencies.

To improve this part, the quality instructional leader or supervisor must provide suggestions about the nature of the curriculum in the music subject area to draw the curriculum. The curriculum should be designed to draw the outcomes of students' learning, and it should be interactive between students, teachers, materials, and university environments. It will also be linked to the school's budget. As a result, the administrators should organize a fund-raising campaign for the institutions. Furthermore, follow the Herrick and Tyler’s ideas for the five components of curriculum development, are effective for improving the curriculum as following:

1. Situational Analysis: emotional, political, cultural, religious, and geographical circumstances of a country.

2. Formulation of Objectives: Society, knowledge, learner, and learning process content.

3. Selection of Content, Scope, and sequence: Available sources and resources, societal demand, international needs, learner or student level and age, method of content organization, number of courses offered, quantity and qualification of teaching staff, scope of subject matter, examination system, and type of society and culture.

4. Activities, Strategies, and Methods of Teaching: Teachers' activities, strategies, and teaching methods used during instruction, activities, and learning experiences. In many countries, curriculum development is a centralized process.

5. Evaluation: It is a dynamic process of addressing a wide range of societal demands, and it necessitates ongoing research to improve processes. However, curriculum evaluation is not the same as student evaluation. The experts can assist in modifying the effective curriculum by implementing the desired changes.

4.3) Teaching Method / Process

Depending on the circumstances, the difficulties and challenges of teaching methods are differed. Each institution has its own set of standards, courses, and teaching methods. Each teacher has a different teaching style and challenges such as challenge to connect between one’s ability to think, play, listen, and analyze, lacking of knowledge of music theory, and lacking of music listening and creating.

Teachers should provide musical knowledge guidelines for students to consider so that they are completely understanding in their learning. Teachers should provide methods to teach students about music theory, which is the foundation for all music subjects, as well as music history so that students will understand the background and style of playing in different eras. They need to prepare a variety of approaches that allow students to listen to, read notation, write notation, recall, and perform familiar and unfamiliar music; create and improvise unfamiliar music; read notation of unfamiliar music while creating or improvising music; and write notation of unfamiliar music while creating or improvising music.

4.4) Teaching Materials

There are many challenges were found on teaching materials topics such as the quantity and quality of the music instruments are insufficient, inadequate classroom and facility materials, music majors are not permitted to use the music department's facilities, and inadequate teaching materials were used in their respective subjects.

Accordingly, the teachers require teaching materials in order to create innovative teaching and learning activities, the teachers must form the committee and communicate to the administrators the importance of the music department.

4.5) Assessment and Evaluation:

Each institution has it own unique grading and assessment systems. Likewise, most of the teachers have their individual assessment form to make the exam or quizzes easier for the students.

For gaining the student's achievement, the teachers should concern to assess and evaluate all 3 domains; the cognitive domain, psychomotor domain, and affective domain. It should be the assessment's key elements, as shown below.

1. Cognitive domain evaluation consists of standard examination papers at the national and regional institute levels. The assessment consists of multiple-choice or essay tests in music theory, history, and literature knowledge.

2. Private lessons, jury, committee, and recital concerts should be used to evaluate musical performance skills. The sound quality, rhythmic organization, articulations, and technique use are all important aspects of the performance.

3. In the case of feelings and emotions elicited by music, musicianship, expressional or expressive behaviors are required. Individual students' levels of observational expression and self-narrative writing should guide the assessment.

5) Environment

The teachers expressed their concerns about the lack of soundproofing in the music department's classrooms. As a result, nearby noises are disrupting the music classes.

The classroom environment has an impact on the physical and mental health of teachers, students, and staff. To foster a positive learning environment in schools for students' successful learning and academic development, the government or an authorized committee must prioritize the school environment.

Discussion

The researcher followed the conceptual framework and theories related to music teaching and learning in higher education system in Yangon, Myanmar. Then, collected data from documents, interview, focus groups and observation. After that the researcher analyzed the results in each aspect and synthesized that into the guideline of improving the music teaching and learning in the higher education system in Yangon, Myanmar. Later, the researcher presented the current situation and 5 components of music teaching and learning that is 1) Administration; Administrator, school, and colleague. 2) Teacher 3) Student 4) Teaching and learning; teaching objectives, content/curriculum, teaching method/process, teaching materials and assessment. 5) Environment. Moreover, the researcher presented the Status and problems first. Then presented guidelines for the improvement of music teaching and learning from the books, ideas, theory, interview questions, references, and Focus Group 2 meeting (from the experts).

The experts suggested that improving music education needs corporation between each part of the organization, from the government to the authorized person who led the policy of university and educate people in the country. Besides, people from Myanmar should understand the general knowledge

in music education because if the people appreciate about the value of music, there is continuing need for the best way of music teaching and learning.

The researcher discovered; 1) there is no proper music teaching in primary through secondary level as well as the teaching methods are insufficient for the students. The administrators pay more attention to academic subjects than music. Thus, the students do not obtain enough information in their music learning. This is consistent with the research of Juvo nen et al. [10] mentioned that today's music education should be based on music making and listening. It is no longer based on traditional frameworks, and it is unfamiliar to today's children. Music education should be based on research. Moreover, it should be based on new ways of teaching and learning musical skills and knowledge. 2) The level of music university entrance examinations is unstandardized. The reasons are the administrators have insufficient knowledge in the music education area and the system is not encouraging the students to learn music at a young age. Moreover, the value of music seems unimportant for the country and there is no proper music teaching in most of the schools, thus when they set up the entrance exam for the music students, the level is unstandardized. This is consistent with the research of Nyein [9] mentioned the formal curriculum and public education system was neglected in government school music education in Myanmar. Saw Moses et al [11]. mentioned that in Myanmar there are many challenges concerned with music training for teachers, effective music curriculum, music facilities, musical instruments, teaching aids, music equipment, and music educational resources. Both public schools and private schools need the support from the government. 3) There are inadequate well-trained qualified teachers. Thus, the administration needs to arrange the seminar or workshop and teaching pedagogy classes for the teachers as similar as the teachers' training for the new teachers. Then the situation of the country is one of the reasons to have enough qualified music teachers. This is consistent with the research of Win [12] mentioned due to the incompetence and lack of teachers, it is necessary to start a professional development program based on the roles and responsibilities of each staff member. Finally, higher education should be provided by international organizations to provide graduates with practical skills. It needs to collaborate with universities and the local private sector. 4) Music students need motivation and inspiration to practice, and they should familiarize themselves with or appreciate the music. The students should have sufficient knowledge of music according to their level. This is consistent with the research of Nyein mentioned that Myanmar is unlike the other Southeast Asian countries like Thailand, Singapore and Indonesia because the country does not have many music competitions and concerts, especially in Western art music [9]. 5) There are not enough teaching materials in each institution because the administration does not pay much attention and support to the music department, or the institutions do not have enough budget. This is consistent with the research of Mai Nay Chi Hnin Pwint Oo mentioned that in Myanmar there are inadequate sources for the music education and lack of facilities and equipment to teach in private lessons [8]. Saw Moses et al. mentioned that in Myanmar there are inadequate materials such as music

facilities, musical instruments, teaching aids, music equipment, and music educational resources. Both public schools and private schools need the support from the government [11]. 6) There are unsystematic curriculum uses in each institution. Thus, every institution is trying to develop the standard music curriculum. In Myanmar, most of the curriculums are arranged by the authorized person, however, the authorized person do not have enough background musical knowledge. Thus, the authorized person needs to collaborate with the music teacher or experts to create the standard music curriculum. On the other hand, some teachers are still unclear about differences between music curriculum and music course syllabus. Many institutions do not have separate curriculums for music departments. This is consistent with the research of Win Zaw Htet mentioned that the importance of curriculum reform in Myanmar is to implement a new curriculum which is focusing on the relevant 21st Century knowledge and revising the deficiencies and weaknesses of the previous basic education curriculum. In Myanmar, the curriculum was reformed once between 1995-1999 and it has been continuously used until the 2015-2016 academic year. The outdated curriculum makes Myanmar education less effective and far from the development of 21st century skills [13]. Lwin said during 1945 to 2002, there was no music curriculum in all primary, secondary, and high school [14]. According to Wallace, the curriculum is designed systematically to assess the students' improvement in learning. Curriculum development is the foundation of designing, analysis, evaluation, and implementation for all levels of the theoretical framework which is the basis of improving school curriculum [15]. 7) There is an unbalancing ratio of teachers and students such as there are inadequate teachers in each respective professional field. The country is still developing and does not have enough qualified teachers. Evarist said the Teachers-student ratio has been a challenge since colonial and missionary times due to high illiteracy and low teacher numbers. Only a small group of advanced students received good educational facilities [16]. 8) Many institutions do not have good quality musical instruments because the respective institution does not have enough budget to provide the instruments. Besides, the administration does not provide enough for the music department, and they do not have the knowledge to have the benefits of decent musical instruments. This is consistent with the research of Day mentioned that the most important requirement for administration is adding the resources in the organization. The unique characteristic of the college or university president is obtaining the additional funds as well as the success or failure of obtaining funds for the college or university is depending on the presidents [17].

Conclusion

Music Education in Myanmar still faces many challenges. The ability to participate in music in everyday life, as well as music learning from the primary level to the higher education level, continues to face disparities in educational opportunities and access to quality music education. Many children do not have the opportunity to learn music at a young age because their parents do not support them, and music is not a mandatory subject in school. It seems that only a portion of the children have more

opportunity to know and learn western music because they are in Christian communities. Furthermore, the music education system in higher education is insufficient. Challenges can take many different forms, including administrative system, teacher's professional standard, student's music ability, teaching and learning quality and environment. Looking closer, the issues that arise in each of these areas all have an impact on one another. Therefore, collaboration and mutual support from all sectors is required to develop and improve the music education system. Recommendations for further research; 1) Research and Study should be done on the music education and administration system in Myanmar Education. 2) Research and Study should be done on the music curriculum development in Myanmar. 3) Research and Study should be done on the development of students' musicianship in Myanmar. 4) Research and Study should be done on the assessment of music teacher's qualifications in Myanmar. 5) Research and Study should be done on the students and their music preferences in Myanmar. 6) Research and Study should be done on the music assessment and evaluation in Myanmar. 7) Research and Study should be done on the development of Myanmar music education.

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