



## WRITING A PIANO GUIDEBOOK FOR THE MUSIC CLUB MEMBER IN SANSHIJIAZI CENTRAL PRIMARY SCHOOL, LIAONING PROVINCE, CHINA

**Chu Chu,<sup>1</sup> Chutasiri Yodwised<sup>2</sup>**

Faculty of Music, Bangkokthonburi University,<sup>1-2</sup>  
China,<sup>1</sup> Thailand<sup>2</sup>

**Email:** 3298635481@qq.com,<sup>1</sup>

**Received:** February 28, 2025; **Revised:** March 15, 2025; **Accepted:** April 4, 2025

### Abstract

Chinese culture places a strong emphasis on education, discipline, and artistic expression, particularly in the realm of music. Traditional beliefs highlight the importance of perseverance, structured learning, and cultural preservation, all of which play a vital role in shaping music education. In rural areas, such as Sanshijiazi Central Primary School in Lingyuan City, Liaoning Province, piano education faces unique challenges, including limited resources and the need for tailored teaching methods that align with students' learning environments. This study aims to enhance rural piano education by analyzing existing teaching methods, developing a structured piano guidebook, and verifying its effectiveness through expert evaluation. A qualitative research methodology was employed, including document analysis, in-depth interviews with experts, and data examination for constructing and validating the guidebook. Key informants were selected based on their extensive experience in piano education, holding at least a Master's degree in the field. The guidebook was designed as an 8-week structured curriculum, incorporating fundamental piano techniques, culturally relevant repertoire, and performance assessments to support students' learning progress.

Expert evaluation results showed an average score of 0.95, indicating the guidebook's high quality and effectiveness, with only minor areas for improvement. The findings of this study contribute to the development of rural piano education by providing a structured, culturally relevant teaching resource. By integrating traditional Chinese educational values with modern pedagogical approaches, this research offers a model for improving piano instruction in similar educational settings, ensuring both cultural preservation and skill development in young learners.

**Keywords:** Writing; Piano Guidebook; Music Club Member; Sanshijiazi Central Primary School

## Introduction

The increasing recognition of music education's importance in primary education across China reflects a significant shift in educational priorities. Over recent years, the Ministry of Education has introduced policies that advocate for the development of arts education, aiming to cultivate well-rounded students who excel not only academically but also in artistic and cultural domains (Li, 2022). In rural areas such as Lingyuan City in Chaoyang City, Liaoning Province, this shift presents both challenges and opportunities. Sanshijiazi Central Primary School has responded to these national directives by establishing a piano club aimed at enriching students' educational experiences through music. This initiative is particularly noteworthy given the limited resources typically available in rural schools, which often lack access to specialized music teachers and comprehensive teaching materials (Chen, 2021).

The establishment of the piano club at Sanshijiazi Central Primary School is a strategic effort to provide students with a structured environment for learning music, which is often absent in rural educational settings. The club serves as a platform for students to develop musical skills, engage in creative expression, and cultivate an appreciation for cultural and artistic practices. This initiative aligns with the broader educational reforms intended to bridge the urban-rural educational divide, ensuring that students in rural areas receive opportunities comparable to their urban counterparts (Wang, 2022). By fostering an interest in

music and providing systematic instruction, the piano club aims to enhance the students' overall educational experience and personal development.

Creating a teaching guidebook specifically tailored for piano club students at Sanshijazi Central Primary School addresses several critical needs. First, it provides a structured curriculum that guides both instructors and students through a comprehensive learning process. Unlike urban schools, rural schools often operate with limited access to experienced music educators and well-developed teaching resources. A tailored teaching guidebook can serve as an invaluable resource, offering step-by-step instructions, lesson plans, and practice exercises designed to meet the unique needs of rural students. This can significantly enhance the effectiveness of music education, ensuring that students receive high-quality instruction regardless of their geographic and economic limitations (Zhao, 2020).

Moreover, the guidebook aims to establish a sustainable model of music education that can be replicated in other rural schools. By documenting effective teaching methodologies, best practices, and pedagogical strategies, the guidebook can serve as a reference for educators seeking to implement similar programs. This contributes to the broader goal of promoting arts education throughout rural China, ensuring equitable access to educational resources and opportunities for all students. The dissemination of such a model supports the national agenda of educational equity, where every child, irrespective of their location, can engage in meaningful and enriching educational activities (Liu, 2021).

Furthermore, the creation of the teaching guidebook is in line with global trends in music education, particularly the emphasis on culturally responsive teaching. Culturally responsive teaching integrates students' cultural backgrounds and experiences into the curriculum, making learning more relevant and engaging for them. In the context of Sanshijazi Central Primary School, this approach means incorporating elements of local culture and traditions into the piano curriculum. Such integration fosters a deeper connection between students and their learning, enhancing their engagement and promoting a greater appreciation for their cultural heritage. This approach not only benefits students academically but also contribute to their cultural and social development (Gay, 2018).

The guidebook also addresses the professional development needs of teachers in rural areas. Due to the scarcity of specialized music educators in these regions, generalist teachers often assume the role of music instructors. The teaching guidebook can equip these teachers with the necessary tools and knowledge to effectively teach piano, even without a formal background in music education. By providing clear guidelines, instructional strategies, and practical resources, the guidebook enhances the overall quality of music instruction. This ensures that students receive a well-rounded education that includes the arts, which is crucial for their holistic development (Deng, 2019).

## **Research Objectives**

1. To study the piano method from Sanshijiazi Central Primary School.
2. To construct a piano guidebook.
- 3 To verify the piano guidebook.

## **Literature reviews**

In the early 20th century, music education in rural schools was sporadic, heavily relying on local community efforts and individual passion for teaching music. Campbell highlights how arts education reforms began to emphasize the cognitive, emotional, and social benefits of music for young learners. These reforms recognized the importance of arts in creating a well-rounded curriculum, but limited resources and geographical isolation often hindered the inclusion of formal piano education in rural settings. Campbell's work underscores the early disparities in educational opportunities and the importance of policy interventions to address them (Campbell, 2018).

The mid-20th century saw significant progress in incorporating music education into rural schools, spurred by government and private initiatives. Kassner discusses the establishment of summer music camps and teacher training workshops that aimed to enhance the skills of rural educators. However, Kassner also points out the persistent financial challenges, particularly the high costs associated with purchasing and maintaining pianos, which remained a significant barrier to widespread piano education. Despite these efforts, the lack of

sustainable funding limited the long-term impact of these initiatives (Kassner, (2020).

Recent technological advancements have transformed piano education, particularly in rural areas. Bauer highlights the role of digital pianos, online tutorials, and interactive software in making music education more accessible. Digital tools are more affordable and require less maintenance than traditional acoustic pianos, allowing rural schools to overcome some financial and logistical barriers. Additionally, Bauer emphasizes the importance of distance learning technologies, which connect rural students to qualified instructors and high-quality resources regardless of location. This technological shift has been a game-changer in bridging the rural-urban educational divide (Bauer, 2014).

Government policies have been pivotal in supporting rural music education. Li examines arts education reforms in China, where the Ministry of Education implemented policies to promote music programs in rural schools. These policies included increased funding, provision of musical instruments, and the recruitment of qualified music teachers. Li argues that such government-led initiatives not only improve access to music education but also foster creativity and cultural awareness among rural students. However, challenges such as teacher retention and the uneven distribution of resources remain significant hurdles (Li, 2022).

The role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community initiatives is critical in promoting music education in underserved areas. Duke highlights various NGO-led programs that have supported rural schools by donating pianos, training teachers, and organizing workshops and concerts. These efforts not only improve access to piano education but also cultivate a sense of community pride and cultural connection among students. Duke emphasizes the importance of local community involvement in sustaining these programs, which is essential for their long-term success (Duke, 2019).

Financial constraints are among the most significant barriers to implementing piano education in rural and under-resourced schools. Hallam highlights that limited budgets often force schools to prioritize core academic



subjects, leaving little to no funds for music programs. The high cost of purchasing and maintaining pianos, as well as acquiring accessories like sheet music and tuning services, exacerbates this issue. Hallam also emphasizes that operational expenses, such as utilities and maintenance for dedicated music spaces, further strain school resources. Without adequate funding, these financial hurdles continue to hinder the development of robust music education programs in rural areas (Hallam, 2010).

A shortage of qualified music educators is another pressing issue in rural areas. Chen explains that many rural schools rely on generalist teachers who lack the specialized training required for effective piano instruction. This results in suboptimal teaching practices that hinder student progress. Furthermore, Chen highlights the scarcity of professional development opportunities for teachers in under-resourced areas, preventing them from staying updated on modern pedagogical techniques. Addressing this shortage requires targeted investments in teacher training and support systems to build a sustainable workforce of skilled educators (Chen, 2021).

Educational challenges also stem from the lack of culturally relevant curricula and instructional materials. Wiggins argues that standardized curricula designed for urban or suburban schools often fail to address the unique needs of rural students, whose backgrounds, experiences, and learning styles may differ significantly. Moreover, rural schools often lack access to high-quality teaching resources, such as textbooks and multimedia materials, further impeding effective instruction. Wiggins stresses the need for adaptable and inclusive curricula that consider the specific contexts of rural education (Wiggins, 2007).

Cultural challenges further complicate the implementation of piano education in rural settings. Green explores how societal attitudes and priorities can influence the value placed on music education. In some communities, limited appreciation for the arts leads to low parental and administrative support for music programs. Green also highlights that socioeconomic-factors often drive families to prioritize academic or vocational activities over musical pursuits, resulting in low enrollment and engagement in piano education. Overcoming these cultural barriers requires raising awareness about the cognitive and emotional benefits of music education and fostering community buy-in (Green, 2002).

## Research Methodology

The researcher chose to use a qualitative research method, by reviewing documents, conducting in-depth interviews with experts and examining data for constructing and verifying a piano guidebook.

These individuals will review and validate the research tools, such as the guidebook or questionnaires, ensuring their reliability and accuracy.

### Criteria for Key Informants

1. Had more than ten years of teaching experience in piano education.
2. Graduated with a Master's degree or above in piano education or a related field.

**Key informants:** 1) Zhao Dianyuan / Director of the Chinese Musicians Association. 2) Zeng Tao / Artistic Director of the School of Music of Liaoning Normal University. 3) He Yumeng / female, associate professor, master's tutor.

## Results

**To study the piano method from Sanshijiazi Central Primary School, Lingyuan City, Chaoyang City, Liaoning Province:** Through detailed analysis and observations, this research identified the specific requirements and existing teaching methods of piano education at Sanshijiazi Central Primary School. The study explored three core areas: theoretical knowledge, practical application, and pedagogical techniques. Theoretical knowledge focused on understanding the principles of rural music education, the challenges of limited resources, and the cultural context influencing piano instruction. Practical knowledge involved observing teaching sessions, assessing piano techniques used by instructors, and understanding how students engage with the learning process. Pedagogical techniques emphasized the role of rhythm, finger exercises, expression, and gradual skill-building in improving students' piano abilities. These insights formed the foundation for constructing the guidebook tailored to the needs of rural students.

**To construct a piano guidebook:** The guidebook was developed as a structured teaching resource to address the specific needs of students in Sanshijazi Central Primary School. It consists of four chapters, 8 weeks, each with targeted lesson plans, each lesson lasting 60 minutes, and exercises. The first chapter focuses on introduction to piano basics, including posture, keys, and rhythm fundamentals. The second chapter covers songs like "Embroidered Golden Plaque," "Piano Piece No. 5," and "Memories of Childhood." The chapter third also discusses midterm performance assessment, practice and refinement, and the final chapter integrates final performance of "Summer of Kikujiro."

**To verify the piano guidebook:** The examination by the 3 experts, the average evaluation result is 0.95. This shows that the piano guidebook is of very high quality. There are only 2 points that the experts are not sure about.

## Discussions

Before creating the piano guidebook, it was essential to analyze the existing teaching methods and practices at Sanshijazi Central Primary School. Rural piano education faces unique challenges, including limited access to resources, lack of professional instructors, and insufficient exposure to structured music training. The results of the research are consistent with the Ho, et al., (2003) that explains six months of piano training significantly improved verbal memory in children compared to those without music training, attributed to memorization techniques like recalling notes, rhythms, and sequences. These skills extend beyond music, contributing to better performance in other memory-dependent academic tasks and fostering a cognitive advantage in various learning contexts.

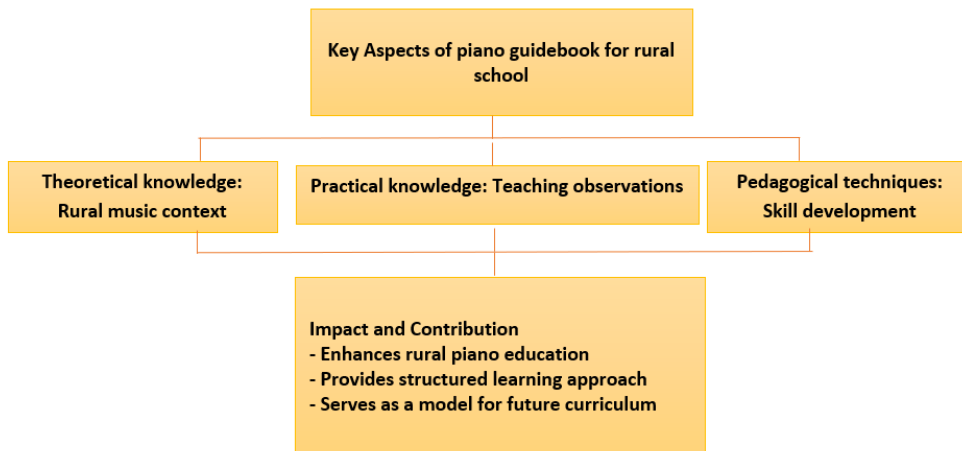
The results of the research are also consistent with the Rauscher et al., (1993) report that describes spatial-temporal reasoning, a cognitive skill critical for problem-solving and reasoning in subjects like mathematics and science, also benefits from piano education. Rauscher et al. found that children who received piano instruction performed significantly better on spatial-temporal tasks than those who did not. Known as the "Mozart effect," this phenomenon suggests that structured piano practice strengthens neural pathways associated with spatial-temporal reasoning.



The results of the research are also consistent with the Schellenberg (2004) report that describes the cognitive demands of learning to play the piano, such as reading music and coordinating hand movements, stimulate general intellectual growth. Schellenberg's study found that children who received music lessons scored higher on IQ tests compared to their peers without music training. This suggests that piano education enhances cognitive flexibility and general intellectual abilities, contributing to improved academic performance across various subjects. The study highlights the potential of piano instruction to promote intellectual enrichment as part of a comprehensive education. Additionally, the influence of cultural and environmental factors on learning styles was considered. Addressing these gaps formed the foundation for designing a comprehensive guidebook tailored to the needs of rural primary school students.

The results of the research are also consistent with Byun, Meece, & Irvin (2012) describes the rural students benefit from a community-oriented approach to piano education, which fosters intrinsic motivation. Byun et al. observe that integrating music into community life, such as through local festivals and events, gives rural students opportunities to showcase their skills and receive recognition from their communities. This approach not only enhances student engagement but also helps preserve and promote cultural heritage. In addition, it is consistent with Schafft & Jackson (2010) explains the community involvement is crucial for piano education in rural areas, where strong parental and local involvement in organizing music events enhances students' experiences and fosters a sense of belonging. In urban areas, collaborations with arts organizations, universities, and professional musicians provide enriching opportunities like workshops and performances.

## New Knowledges



**Figure 1:** New Knowledges Diagram of Piano Guidebook for The Music Club Member in Sanshijiazi Central Primary School

## Conclusions

This study successfully analyzed the piano teaching methods at Sanshijiazi Central Primary School, identifying key theoretical, practical, and pedagogical aspects that influence rural piano education. Based on these insights, a structured piano guidebook was developed, featuring an 8-week curriculum with targeted lessons and exercises designed to enhance students' technical and expressive skills. The guidebook incorporates fundamental piano techniques, culturally relevant repertoire, and performance assessments to ensure a comprehensive learning experience. Expert evaluation of the guidebook yielded an average score of 0.95, indicating its high quality and effectiveness, with only minor areas for improvement. This research provides a valuable resource for enhancing piano education in rural schools and offers a model for future curriculum development.

## References

- Bauer, W. I. (2014). **Music learning today: Digital pedagogy for creating, performing, and responding to music.** Oxford University Press.
- Chen, X. (2021). **Music education in rural China: Challenges and opportunities.** Journal of Educational Development, 45(3), pp. 234-245.
- Deng, L. (2019). **Professional development for rural music teachers in China.** Music Education Research, 21(2), pp. 187-203.
- Duke, R. A. (2019). **Intelligent music teaching: Essays on the core principles of effective instruction.** Learning and Behavior Resources.
- Gay, G. (2018). **Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice (3rd ed.).** Teachers College Press.
- Green, L. (2002). **How popular musicians learn: A way ahead for music education.** Ashgate Publishing.
- Hallam, S. (2001). **The development of metacognition in musicians: Implications for education.** British Journal of Music Education, 18(1), pp. 27-39.
- Li, H. (2022). **Policy reforms in Chinese arts education: Implications for music education in primary schools.** Arts Education Policy Review, 123(1), pp. 45-57.
- Liu, Y. (2021). **Promoting equitable access to arts education in rural China.** International Journal of Education, 67(2), pp. 189-203.
- Wang, M. (2022). **Bridging the urban-rural divide in Chinese education: A focus on arts programs.** Education and Society, 54(4), 321-338.
- Wiggins, J. (2007). **Compositional process in music.** In L. Bresler (Ed.), International Handbook of Research in Arts Education, Springer. pp. 453-470.
- Zhao, Q. (2020). **Developing music curriculum for rural primary schools in China.** Curriculum Studies Journal, 52(3), pp. 310-325.