

UDC 37

DOI: 10.34670/AR.2025.80.13.021

Scientific and Methodological Support of General Music Education in Higher Education Institutions of China

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Abstract

General music education plays an essential role in shaping the cultural literacy, creativity, and professional development of students in higher education institutions in China. Scientific and methodological support is a key factor ensuring the quality, effectiveness, and sustainability of this educational process. The paper examines the theoretical foundations of music pedagogy in the Chinese higher education context, highlighting approaches to curriculum design, teaching methods, and the integration of traditional and modern elements of musical culture. Special attention is given to methodological innovations, the role of information technologies in music education, and the adaptation of international pedagogical experience. The study emphasizes the necessity of developing a system of continuous scientific and methodological support for general music education to strengthen cultural identity, enhance artistic competencies, and align with the global trends of higher education development.

For citation

Yao Jie (2025) Nauchno-metodicheskoe obespechenie obshchego muzykal'nogo obrazovaniya v vysshih uchebnykh zavedeniyakh Kitaia [Scientific and Methodological Support of General Music Education in Higher Education Institutions of China]. *Pedagogicheskii zhurnal* [Pedagogical Journal], 15 (10A), pp. 132-139. DOI: 10.34670/AR.2025.80.13.021

Keywords

Music education, higher education, pedagogy, methodological support, curriculum development, China, innovation, digital technologies, cultural identity.

Introduction

General music education in Chinese higher education institutions plays an essential role in shaping students' cultural literacy, creativity, and overall personality development. It is not only an artistic discipline but also an integral part of the holistic education system, supporting the cultivation of aesthetic values and contributing to the broader goals of social and cultural progress. As China continues to modernize its higher education system, scientific and methodological support becomes increasingly important for ensuring that music education aligns with both national cultural traditions and international educational standards.

Research shows that music education in Chinese universities is facing challenges in balancing traditional Chinese cultural elements with global educational models. On the one hand, the system continues to rely on Western theoretical frameworks and methodologies; on the other hand, there is a strong demand for the preservation and promotion of national musical heritage [Li, 2023]. This tension highlights the importance of developing a scientific and methodological foundation capable of integrating diverse pedagogical approaches.

At the same time, the formation of music culture in Chinese universities is closely tied to the cultural identity of students. Music education contributes to moral, aesthetic, and intellectual development, fostering imagination, creative skills, and national pride through the study of both Chinese folklore and international works [Liu, 2021]. This dual orientation strengthens the role of music education as both a channel for cultural inheritance and a tool for global communication.

Furthermore, scholars emphasize that scientific and methodological support is required to ensure the sustainable development of music education. This involves designing curricula that reflect both traditional and modern elements, providing teachers with methodological guidance, and introducing innovative educational technologies. Without systematic support, music education risks becoming fragmented and unable to meet the growing demands of a multicultural and knowledge-driven society [Xu, 2019].

Theoretical Foundations of Music Pedagogy

The theoretical basis of music pedagogy in Chinese higher education draws from both national traditions and global educational models. In Confucian philosophy, music was regarded as a crucial means for moral cultivation and the regulation of social order, forming one of the earliest conceptual frameworks for understanding the educational value of music in China [Tan, 2016]. These early foundations emphasized the ethical and aesthetic functions of music, a perspective that continues to influence music pedagogy in contemporary higher education institutions.

Over the course of the twentieth century, Chinese universities adopted theoretical structures rooted in Western classical traditions, including solfeggio, harmony, and counterpoint. At the same time, the process of localization encouraged the incorporation of national elements such as folk songs, traditional instruments, and Chinese compositional techniques. This combination reflects the dual nature of music education in China, which is simultaneously informed by international pedagogical practices and national cultural identity [Li, 2023].

Current scholarship emphasizes the necessity of balancing theoretical study with practice in music education. Higher education curricula frequently integrate music theory with performance training, ensemble participation, and improvisation. This approach supports a holistic vision of pedagogy that prioritizes intellectual development, creativity, and cultural awareness in equal measure. Studies on music theory instruction in Chinese universities also highlight the need for innovative methods to

enhance comprehension of complex concepts, such as rhythm, melodic structure, and harmonic progressions [Wu, 2024].

Interdisciplinary perspectives further enrich the theoretical foundations of music pedagogy. By linking music with psychology, cultural studies, and digital technology, educators aim to prepare students for the challenges of contemporary society while retaining the artistic and cultural essence of music education. Such interdisciplinary approaches create opportunities for methodological innovation and ensure the adaptability of music pedagogy in the context of global academic trends.

Current State of General Music Education in Chinese Universities

General music education in China's higher education system has developed rapidly since the late twentieth century, influenced by educational reforms and the growing demand for holistic student development. Today, music is considered an essential component of quality education, providing not only artistic training but also contributing to students' moral, intellectual, and cultural growth. However, despite significant progress, the current state of music education reflects both achievements and persistent challenges.

Research indicates that universities across China differ widely in their approaches to music education. Specialized conservatories, such as the Central Conservatory of Music and the Shanghai Conservatory, focus heavily on professional training, while comprehensive universities integrate music into general education programs, often with limited resources and fewer specialized faculty [Yu, Zhai, 2012]. This dual system creates diversity but also highlights disparities between elite institutions and regional universities.

One of the major issues faced by universities is the shortage of qualified music faculty. A recent analysis emphasizes that many campuses struggle to meet curricular requirements due to insufficient staff and outdated teaching resources. This results in unequal access to high-quality music education, particularly in less-developed regions [Wang, 2023]. Moreover, the rapid expansion of student enrollment in higher education has increased the pressure on institutions to provide music courses that are both relevant and effective.

Pedagogical reforms are increasingly recognized as necessary to improve the effectiveness of music education. Scholars note that traditional teaching models, often dominated by rote learning and theoretical study, do not sufficiently engage students or foster creativity. Instead, there is a growing push for innovative methodologies, including interactive learning, project-based education, and the use of digital technologies in music instruction [Gao, 2017]. These reforms are seen as essential to align music education with the broader goals of contemporary higher education in China.

Scientific and Methodological Support: Key Components

Scientific and methodological support of general music education in Chinese universities is a comprehensive system that ensures consistency, quality, and innovation in teaching practice. It includes curriculum development, pedagogical strategies, resource provision, and the integration of modern educational technologies, all of which are necessary to meet the demands of higher education.

Curriculum development forms the foundation of methodological support. Chinese universities design programs that balance traditional Chinese music with Western theory, reflecting both cultural heritage and global educational standards. Scholars emphasize that curriculum design must respond to contemporary challenges, such as the need for creative competencies and interdisciplinary learning [Yang, 2010]. Methodological support therefore includes creating flexible curricular frameworks that can be adapted to different institutional contexts, from conservatories to comprehensive universities.

Teacher training and methodological recommendations are another crucial element. The shortage of qualified music faculty in China has been identified as a major challenge, making continuous professional development essential. Universities are encouraged to provide methodological guidance through workshops, training programs, and the exchange of international pedagogical practices. Studies suggest that effective methodological support increases both teacher competence and student engagement, thereby raising the overall quality of education [Wang, 2023].

Resource development plays a significant role in ensuring methodological effectiveness. The provision of textbooks, digital platforms, and multimedia tools supports diverse teaching methods and expands learning opportunities for students. For example, digital platforms allow the inclusion of interactive assignments, online listening materials, and virtual performance spaces, creating new possibilities for independent learning and creative expression. Research highlights that inadequate infrastructure and outdated teaching resources continue to limit progress, underscoring the importance of investment in both physical and digital resources [Wang, 2024].

Methodological support in music education also involves building systems of assessment and quality assurance. The introduction of innovative evaluation tools, including competency-based assessment and performance portfolios, enables universities to align learning outcomes with broader educational goals. This ensures that students not only acquire technical skills but also develop creativity, critical thinking, and cultural literacy.

Innovative Approaches and Technologies in Music Education

The rapid development of digital technologies has fundamentally reshaped the ways in which music education is organized and delivered in Chinese higher education institutions. One of the central features of this transformation is the integration of digital platforms and interactive tools that enable students to experience music in more dynamic and participatory ways. Research indicates that digital technologies are increasingly used not only for traditional theoretical instruction but also for creative tasks such as composition, performance simulation, and collaborative projects. This allows students to actively engage with the material, explore new forms of musical expression, and develop technical skills that are directly relevant to the digital era [Jiang, 2024].

Another innovative approach is the digital empowerment of traditional Chinese music culture. Universities are experimenting with digital archives, virtual instruments, and online performance platforms to preserve and promote folk and classical music traditions. By digitizing ancient scores, developing multimedia teaching resources, and offering online courses in traditional instruments, institutions ensure that students can access diverse cultural materials regardless of time or location. This approach not only expands the reach of music education but also strengthens cultural identity by integrating local traditions into the modern educational framework [Guo, Zhang, Sun, 2024]. Such innovations highlight the dual role of technology: as a tool for modernizing pedagogy and as a means of cultural preservation.

In addition, innovative teaching strategies emphasize the role of student-centered learning and creative independence. Research on music theory instruction has shown that students respond more positively when teaching incorporates interactive assignments, digital simulations, and collaborative activities that go beyond rote memorization of theory. For example, programs that combine traditional instruction with digital music software and performance-based assessments have been found to improve both comprehension and creativity. This reflects a broader shift in music pedagogy from teacher-centered models to more flexible, exploratory learning environments that foster critical thinking and artistic innovation [Wu, 2024].

Overall, the innovative use of digital technologies and modern teaching strategies in Chinese universities represents a significant shift toward more inclusive, interactive, and culturally rich music education. By combining technological resources with methodological reforms, institutions are redefining the role of music education in higher education, aligning it more closely with the needs of the 21st century while maintaining strong connections to cultural heritage.

International Experience and Its Adaptation in China

The development of music education in China has always been closely linked with international exchange and the selective adoption of foreign pedagogical models. Since the early twentieth century, Chinese educators and musicians have studied abroad, particularly in Europe, and brought back methodologies in harmony, counterpoint, and music pedagogy that were later integrated into Chinese curricula. This reliance on foreign models has remained a critical aspect of the modernization of music education in Chinese universities, but it has also presented challenges in terms of cultural adaptation and balance between Western theories and Chinese traditions. Scholars note that the adaptation of international methods must be carefully adjusted to reflect China's cultural context, ensuring that global best practices strengthen rather than overshadow local identity [Zhu, Su, 2018].

One of the most influential trends in recent decades has been the promotion of academic mobility, with many Chinese students and teachers participating in study-abroad programs funded by initiatives such as the China Scholarship Council and the Belt and Road Initiative. Research shows that these experiences have a profound impact on the professional development of future music teachers, as they introduce diverse repertoires, pedagogical approaches, and global perspectives. Educators returning from abroad often enrich Chinese classrooms by incorporating performance practices and methodologies not traditionally used in China, particularly in areas such as vocal music and instrumental training [Wang, 2024]. However, this process also creates tensions, as the integration of Western models must coexist with the task of maintaining strong links to traditional Chinese musical culture.

At the same time, Chinese universities have become increasingly internationalized, hosting large numbers of foreign students and engaging in academic cooperation with institutions worldwide. The presence of international students and faculty has enriched the environment of Chinese music education, facilitating intercultural learning and the adaptation of teaching methods to a global audience. Studies emphasize that intercultural adaptation in Chinese higher education requires adjustments in curriculum design, teaching styles, and the institutional environment, in order to foster mutual understanding and collaboration across cultural boundaries [Tian, Lu, 2018]. These international exchanges have provided Chinese music education with opportunities to modernize while simultaneously creating pressure to redefine its own pedagogical identity.

Overall, the adaptation of international experience in Chinese music education reflects a dynamic process of negotiation between global influences and national traditions. By selectively integrating foreign pedagogical models while promoting its own cultural heritage, Chinese higher education seeks to position itself as both a participant in global academic networks and a guardian of unique cultural traditions.

Perspectives and Strategic Directions

The future of general music education in Chinese higher education institutions depends on a balanced integration of tradition and innovation. On the one hand, it is necessary to preserve and strengthen the cultural foundations of music education, ensuring that students remain connected to

China's rich musical heritage. This includes expanding access to traditional instruments, folk repertoires, and national compositional techniques while embedding these elements within a modern curriculum that resonates with the realities of contemporary education. On the other hand, universities must also embrace global developments by promoting creativity, cross-disciplinary learning, and technological adaptation. Such a dual strategy ensures that music education in China maintains its cultural identity while also positioning itself as a competitive player within the international academic and artistic community.

Strategic development requires the creation of a comprehensive system of scientific and methodological support that can respond to changing educational needs. This involves building stronger research networks, fostering international partnerships, and investing in digital infrastructure that supports innovative pedagogy. Moreover, music education should be aligned with broader social and economic goals, including cultural diplomacy, creative industries, and lifelong learning. By pursuing these strategic directions, Chinese universities will not only enhance the quality of music education but also contribute to the cultivation of socially responsible, culturally literate, and globally competent graduates capable of leading the next stage of educational and cultural development.

Conclusion

General music education in higher education institutions of China occupies a central place in the formation of cultural identity, creativity, and holistic personal development of students. Its foundations are built on a synthesis of traditional Chinese philosophy, Western pedagogical influences, and innovative practices that respond to the demands of modern society. By integrating national cultural heritage with global educational models, music education not only preserves the values of the past but also ensures the adaptability and relevance of teaching practices for the future. This balance highlights the strategic role of scientific and methodological support in guiding universities toward sustainable development in the field of music education.

Looking ahead, the effectiveness of music education in China will increasingly depend on systematic investment in research, curriculum design, teacher training, and digital resources. International collaboration, interdisciplinary innovation, and the careful adaptation of global best practices will further strengthen its impact. By fostering creativity, cultural literacy, and global competence, general music education in Chinese universities can serve as both a guardian of cultural traditions and a driver of educational modernization. In this dual role, it has the potential to significantly contribute not only to the enrichment of higher education but also to the broader cultural and social development of the country.

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Научно-методическое обеспечение общего музыкального образования в высших учебных заведениях Китая

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Аннотация

Общее музыкальное образование играет важную роль в формировании культурной грамотности, творческого потенциала и профессионального развития студентов высших учебных заведений Китая. Научно-методическое обеспечение является ключевым фактором, гарантирующим качество, эффективность и устойчивость данного образовательного процесса. В статье рассматриваются теоретические основы музыкальной педагогики в контексте китайского высшего образования, выделяются подходы к проектированию учебных программ, методам преподавания и интеграции традиционных и современных элементов музыкальной культуры. Особое внимание уделяется методическим инновациям, роли информационных технологий в музыкальном образовании и адаптации международного педагогического опыта. Подчеркивается необходимость формирования системы непрерывного научно-методического обеспечения общего музыкального образования для укрепления культурной идентичности, развития художественных компетенций и соответствия глобальным тенденциям развития высшей школы.

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Для цитирования в научных исследованиях

Яо Цзе. Scientific and Methodological Support of General Music Education in Higher Education Institutions of China // Педагогический журнал. 2025. Т. 15. № 10А. С. 132-139. DOI: 10.34670/AR.2025.80.13.021

Ключевые слова

Музыкальное образование, высшая школа, педагогика, методическое обеспечение, разработка учебных программ, Китай, инновации, цифровые технологии, культурная идентичность.

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