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The Delicate Community Singing in China: A Case Study in Xiamen

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Abstract

This study explored the practices of community music-making as a place-based activity in a music training institute setting. One case study in Xiamen is introduced to identify the meaning, process, context of community music-making in China, especially for the young generation.

A review of the literature related to psychology and sociology indicated that community music is effective in both physical and psychological of improving citizens' quality of life as an appropriate, enjoyable, and beneficial form. At the same time, the formation of activities needs specific conditions: time, space, people, which consist of the uniqueness of the activities. Exploring these questions in the Chinese context are the research goals of this study.

A qualitative method was used in this study including observation and interview to explore the performance characteristics and development process of this activity. The facilitator was interviewed about the description of the organizational and development process as well as the future direction of the organization, while participants were interviewed about their experience, feelings, and thoughts about the activity. Participants' emotional and learning states were recorded as part of the data through observations.

The results show that community music activity in this case organized by private profit organizations has its special delicate characteristics. First, it has a rich form of expression in the performance including a live band, many teachers teaching at the same time, and a professional film team to shoot the performance. The activity is sustainable because it brings in additional commercial income for the organization by using the internet network to build up its reputation and brand. Most of the participants are around 25-35 years old with some middle-aged women. Young participants claimed that it is a way to make like-minded friends, as well as connect with older participants. It is also a way to reduce stress.

There is still room to explore whether future development will require the involvement of government organizations. The facilitator also mentioned that if the activity is to generalize to other areas while some structure may need to change to solve the financial issue. Since there is only one case, the limitation lies in its particular context. These findings indicate a positive effect on citizens' participating community music, it is suggested to facilitate in a wider context of China.