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Peers Learning: A Student Program of Online Musical Instrument Accompaniment Training During Epidemic

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Abstract

Due to the influence of COVID-19, the prevalence of online courses soared in 2020. This was even true of music classes-- the traditional face-to-face classes moved online. In order to accommodate demand, some for-profit online tutoring institutions emerged, including Fast Accompany Training, Small Leaf Training, and VIP Accompany Training. The research object of this paper is to follow the effectiveness of a free online tutoring project carried out by a music club established by students of the Affiliated High School of SCNU, a famous senior high school in south China. The project recruited high school students with various musical instrument skills to provide online free accompaniment tutoring for children aged 6-12 who were learning to play musical instruments. Parents booked time online, and after learning about the students' interests, the club assigned corresponding student volunteers to carry out the accompanying practice in the form of online guidance. The project has had great response, which not only attracts the unanimous praise of children and parents, but also attracts more and more high school students as volunteers to actively participate as accompanists.

Through interview and analysis based on educational principles, the success of this mode of teaching lies in the positive significance in both aspects of teaching and learning: ostensibly, the young children benefit by gaining valuable skills in playing their respective instruments. However, this program conferred benefit on the tutors as well; without this volunteer opportunity, many young musicians stop practicing in response to heavy academic pressure in high school. The achievement as volunteers can also effectively reduce the study pressures of high school. This program helped students regain their sense of purpose in continuing to learn music. Additionally, this program helps the tutors to improve their communication abilities, as they must effectively communicate to teach concepts online. This is exactly the purpose of this student club: its initials "D & C" stand for Dedication & Conversion - serving society with a dedication to public welfare and promoting personal conversion through music learning.

Children who are guided by accompanist training from older peers will learn more from this kind of online learning. The children were more engaged and willing to learn from their peers than their parents or teachers in professional accompanying practice institutions. The high school students were strictly selected as excellent students; this kind of outstanding student aura makes parents willing to let their children participate in such tutoring, not only because the program was offered for free, but also because the young children could be influenced by the power of a fine example. The design of the program was intended such that outstanding youth could influence the music education of young children, bringing benefits to both sides of teaching and learning.