

SYM-164

Possibilities and Alternatives in the Pandemic: Music Education in Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan

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Abstract

This Panel discussion is focused on the change of music education during the pandemic of COVID-19 in various Asian regions. The content refers to the “*Exploring Possibilities and Alternatives in a Changing Future*”, the theme of 2021 APSMER symposium”. Researchers from Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan would illustrate how music educators react to this challenge in their regions during the pandemic. As well, the panellists would discuss the possibility, challenge, and other new issues in music instruction.

In Hong Kong, the COVID-19 disease was first found in late January 2020. All schools were closed in mid-February until May. Since then, schools have adopted online teaching alternatively with face-to-face lessons. For music teachers, online teaching is totally new. Practical and ensemble training, which are very important to students’ musical development, are very difficult to go online. Public practical examinations, including the Hong Kong Diploma for Secondary Education Music Examination, are forced to cease.

In Japan, this COVID-19 crisis has exerted a great influence on music education in Japan due to the occupation of such activities as singing and playing instruments at the elementary and secondary music classrooms. This unprecedented situation, however, would doubtless force some teachers to rethink their predilection for music composed by professionals assuming imaginary audience and stage; the commodification of music by the entertainment industry and so on, and help them to see some alternative activities based on creative music making.

In the Republic of Korea, music educators have taught music in-person or via online depending on the social distancing levels. They had to re-organize or change learning content and music activities, and provide individual and collaborative music activities in a different way than before. It was very difficult to make music together at the same time in online music classes. While this pandemic situation continues, music educators have been making various attempts for more effective music teaching and learning in this new normal era.

In Taiwan, the pandemic has not been as serious as in other countries and schools still conduct conventional face-to-face classes, yet based on the idea of “preemptive preparation”, teachers in all levels of schooling are asked to practice and be familiar with various on-line teaching platforms. Although the pandemic seems to be possibly an accelerator of on-line

teaching and learning, several music learning activities such as group music making and ensemble, face their limitations of practicing in the on-line environment.