

Music Curriculum in Higher Education that is Consistent with Student Development in the 21st Century: Empirical Data from Rajabhat University in Thailand

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Abstract

The curriculum is important in setting the directions of teaching and learning activities and developing students to have knowledge and ability which lead to success. This research focuses on the study of music curriculum development and student development with the objectives: 1. To analyze the music curriculum in higher education 2. To study structures and learning outcomes of music curriculum in higher education in student development according to the 21st century skills and 3. To develop music curriculum in higher education to respond to changes in the 21st century. The research scope is to study Rajabhat University group in Thailand by analyzing data from the curriculum structures and learning outcomes. The correctness and suitability are assessed by using EDFR technique for 2 rounds to confirm the data and use it to create a questionnaire to organize a group discussion (focus group). The study shows that the music curriculum in Rajabhat University has a total of 127-140 credits throughout the curriculum, which is in line with the standards for undergraduate programs, with a total of not less than 120 credits. The learning outcomes of music curriculum of Rajabhat University have 6 learning outcomes which are consistent with the standard qualifications of higher education. It is also found that developing the curriculum to be consistent with changes in the 21st century must be created with outstanding points and unique identity and set clear goals for developing students to have knowledge and skills consistent with the needs of Thai and global contexts.

Keywords: Music Curriculum, Higher Education, Rajabhat University, 21st Century

INTRODUCTION

The way of life in society is changing rapidly. It comes from thinking about innovation and new technology that plays a role in making life more convenient, faster, accessible, and modern to the point of greatly advancing the boundaries of education. Divisions or educational institutions must think of ways to improve education system to be consistent with the social context and create products from education to respond to the needs of society. This is challenging and requires good management methods and preparation. One way to deal with such a challenge of changing education to be in line with society in the 21st century is through knowledge and innovation (Barrot J., 2023) to be the driving force for developing education to be appropriately in line with changes in the world context. In addition to knowledge and innovation that are important to help move through changes smoothly, the second thing that will help support is curriculum. The curriculum must always be supported, added necessary skills and ready to be dynamic in the 21st century (James Bellanca and Ron Brand, 2018) to promote and focus on student competency in line with international educational managements that have progressed for a long time; for example, Singapore, which has an advanced education system and has continued to develop by giving importance to every citizen in the country. As a result, the education system focuses on setting goals for building the competencies of individual learners with the idea that education builds people, people build nations. Because Singapore is a small island without many resources, human resources are the only important resource that can help develop society and are the future of the country. (Pittayapongsakorn, N., 2021)

Effective education management involves not only learning and understanding within the community and society context but also must have a curriculum that is a tool to facilitate the teaching and learning processes and a framework to set the direction for learners to have knowledge, skills and abilities until graduation. All of

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this, if there is not the same standard in the system, it is difficult to make education within the country successful; for example, the education system in Japan is praised for having an education system that takes good care of students and it is accepted internationally. The Japanese education system has also been spread to many countries because the Japanese education system has outstanding features which are Standardization and Discipline. These concepts allow the education system of Japan to raise the level of development of the educational system to be more efficient and able to develop students. This causes interest for countries that are developing their educational system. Japanese education sets important goals: solid academic abilities, rich humanity, and health and stamina and sets the period for developing the curriculum every 10 years to ensure a high quality education system. The curriculum must be consistent with the national policies and meet the economic and social needs of the country with reformation of the educational curriculum from repeated study of the content into focus on students using knowledge in challenging situations. This curriculum change aims to maintain a balance between basic academic learning to be consistent with the development of the 21st century skills in creativity and problem solving. (Boonsue, P., 2021)

From this study, it is evident that the importance factors are consistent and different in various contexts but they have the same goal which is to develop and elevate education to a higher standard and efficiency for the quality of the students who are an important resource in developing society and the country in accordance with a world society that is changing all the time. For this reason, the researcher has studied guidelines for developing music curriculum in higher education for creating or developing important music curriculum. To be able to respond to the needs of society, it must be therefore based on prospective research studies using Delphi technique, which is a process of gathering opinions from experts or related experts in order to get appropriate, consistent and reliable information and to find guidelines for the music curriculum in higher education in Thailand in the 21st century and to find new guidelines that are consistent with the social context in music education in order to prepare for further changes in the future.

Objective of the Research

1. To analyze music curriculum in higher education
2. To study structures and learning outcomes of music curriculum in higher education and student development according to the 21st century skills.
3. To develop music curriculum in higher education to respond to changes in the 21st century.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher focuses on studying only the music curriculum in the music major of Rajabhat University in Thailand. The researchers classifies the population into 3 groups, consisting of 1) People who are responsible for the curriculum and instructors of the music curriculum in Rajabhat University to be persons who provide information on management and development of teaching and learning activities, set the framework for direction, planning, quality control, and evaluation 2) Group of instructors in the music curriculum, personnel, students, and graduates' employees in Rajabhat University to be persons who provide information about courses and course relationships, subjects consistent with the 21st century that should be included in the curriculum and the needs of students, graduates' employees in terms of attitude and suggestion and 3) experts who are educational academics who have knowledge and understanding of the 21st century skills and/or knowledge and understanding of curriculum development and/or knowledge and understanding of music study and/or have knowledge and understanding in promoting student development. The qualifications are having at least a master's degree and have experience in teaching/administrative work/working in education for not less than 5 years.

The sample group consists of 15 people in charge of the music curriculum and instructors of the music curriculum in Rajabhat University from 5 Rajabhat University in each region, 3 people per region, by purposive sampling. The Rajabhat University in Bangkok is Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University. The Rajabhat University in Northern area is Lampang Rajabhat University. The Rajabhat University in Central and Eastern area is Valaya Alongkorn Rajabhat University under the Royal Patronage. The Rajabhat University in North Eastern area is Loei Rajabhat University. The Rajabhat University in Southern and Western area is Suratthani Rajabhat University. 400 persons from 5 Rajabhat Universities classified by region (80 persons per region: 10

music course instructors, 60 students, and 10 graduates' employers in Rajabhat University, by simple random sampling (Stratified Sampling). Also experts are classified into 2 groups: 17 experts who interview to develop the curriculum using the Ethnographic Futures Research (EDFR) technique and 15 experts who join group discussion (focus group) to assess curriculum consistency, by selecting specifically (Purposive sampling)

The Research Tools consist of 1) Course analysis form that is used for analyzing music courses available in Rajabhat University by using Content Analysis 2) Semi-structured interview is a tool used in interviews by specifying questions principally and reasonably 3) 1st assessment of appropriateness or accuracy of data [Ethnographic Delphi Future Research (EDFR)] 4) 2nd assessment of appropriateness or accuracy of data [Ethnographic Delphi Future Research (EDFR)] 5) Questionnaire 6) Group discussion records and 7) Course evaluation form.

Data Collection

There are three (3) steps in collecting data in the research which are Step 1 Analysing the music curriculum in Rajabhat University: The researcher studies related documents and research, studies music courses in Rajabhat University, and conduct semi-structured interviews with 15 persons responsible for and instructors of the music program in Rajabhat University, Step 2 Studying the structure and the learning outcomes of the music curriculum in Rajabhat University in developing students according to the 21st century skills: The researcher synthesizes the contents from Step 1 and studies the 21st century skills. The results from Item 1 and Item 2 are used as a framework for interview and creating an interview form. The researcher then conducts 3 interviews and confirms the interview results using the EDFR technique with 17 related people in order to obtain the structural framework of the music curriculum in Rajabhat University in developing students according to the 21st century skills and to obtain the learning outcomes of the music curriculum in Rajabhat University in developing students according to the 21st century skills, and Step 3 Improving the music curriculum in Rajabhat University to correspond to changes in the 21st century: After completing both steps, the researcher drafts the music curriculum based on the results from Step 2 and from the questionnaires in Step 1. The researcher then collects the information which is presented to the experts by organizing a group discussion (Focus group) to consider the suitability of the music curriculum in the 21st century and using such information from experts from the group discussion to create a questionnaire for instructors, students, and graduates' employers about the suitability of the music curriculum in Rajabhat University that is consistent with student development in the 21st century.

Data Analysis

The Analysis of the research on trends in the music curriculum in Rajabhat University that are consistent with student development in the 21st century has the objective to study and analyze the structure of learning outcomes of the music curriculum in Rajabhat University and to find approaches to develop the music curriculum in Rajabhat University to correspond to changes in the 21st century. The summary of data analysis is as follows:

Research Results

According to the study, the total number of credits is between 127 - 140 credits. The Rajabhat University with the least total number of credits throughout the curriculum is Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University while the Rajabhat University with the most total number of credits throughout the curriculum is Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University. In terms of General Education Subjects, most of the curriculum meet the criteria which is 30 credits, except for Udon Thani Rajabhat University and Maha Sarakham Rajabhat University above the criteria, which is 33 credits, as well as Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University, 32 credits respectively. According to the standard criteria of Specialized Education Subjects, 84 credits are required. The Rajabhat University with the most total number of credits throughout the curriculum is Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University with 104 credits while the Rajabhat Universities with the least total number of credits throughout the curriculum are Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University and Songkhla Rajabhat University with 89 credits. The grouping of specialized subjects consists of core subject, specialized subject and major subject. In some

universities, there is an additional group for professional experience training in specialized subject. Moreover, some universities add English subject as another group. The arrangement of subjects in each group will be different according to the contexts and the goals of each university's curriculum. All Rajabhat universities study free elective courses for 6 credits which correspond to the TQF 1 criteria. Comparative analysis between the learning outcome standards (TQF 1) with the music curriculum in Rajabhat Universities offered in Fine and Applied Arts (as specified in TQF.1) shows that all music courses in Rajabhat Universities have the learning outcomes that are consistent with the 6 standard criteria according to TQF. 1; also, some courses in Rajabhat Universities have different strengths according to their identity. This is to be consistent with the social and the cultural contexts of each region. According to the curriculum analysis, interviews with the representatives from each Rajabhat University group who are the persons and instructors responsible for the curriculum: 5 groups of 3 people each, totaling 15 people, can be summarized not only that student development according to the curriculum goals of each Rajabhat University is overall consistent with TQF. 1 but there are also some universities that focus on additional goals; for example, **1)** Chandrakasem Rajabhat University and Phranakhon Rajabhat University focus on building career in music on students' own. The goal of the curriculum is to develop students in specific areas such as popular music, Jazz music, etc. **2)** Chiang Mai Rajabhat University and Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University focus on promoting technology and innovation with the emphasis of uniqueness of activities and courses that encourage students to create innovations using modern technology **3)** Most Rajabhat Universities aim to equip students with leadership skills by considering changes in current global society that is full of competition and changes. Building leadership and having leadership are therefore important in occupation nowadays **4)** Most Rajabhat Universities aim for students to develop themselves and learn continuously. This is an important factor in living in today's world. According to technological advancement, this causes information and knowledge to be more rapidly and easily accessible. Having learning skills and the need for self-development enable students to keep up with the world and to work effectively in their careers **5)** Most Rajabhat Universities focus on developing research knowledge to create work. Creating new knowledge from research is acceptable and reliable. Therefore, research skills are an important factor that will help students create new knowledge and expand existing knowledge to create quality work in the future. **6)** Most Rajabhat Universities aim to create ethics in the music profession. In every occupation, having professional ethics is an important characteristic. Everyone must have love, honesty, faith, and professional ethics to help them succeed and be accepted in that profession, including the music profession. Raising awareness of professional ethics in music is an important aspect that must be created among students.

Results from the EDFR research study can be summarized in terms of the structure of the music curriculum for specialized subjects as follows: Music Historical Knowledge (interquartile range is 0.5), Music Theory (interquartile range is 0.5), Practical Skills (interquartile range is 0.5), Music Creativity (interquartile range is 0.5) Music Technology (interquartile range is 1.0) Music Thesis and/or Music Presentation (interquartile range is 0.5).

Music curriculum structure that is consistent with student development according to the 21st century skills: Student development can be integrated into subject group consisting of Music Creativity, Music Technology and Music Thesis and/or Music Presentation (interquartile range is 0.5). Student development is integrated into teaching and learning activities such as English Communication Skills with the use of technological equipment to help in the activities. (interquartile range is 1.0). Student development which is integrated into activities that support teaching and learning to help develop other skills for students is an activity that each university organizes for students in each year in order to adapt to careers in current global society by using the contents from teaching and learning, desirable life skills and the 21st century skills, designing activities including organizing performances in which students must lead the entire processes such as organizing meetings, leadership, planning, communication, and teamwork with the use of creativity integration of various sciences (interquartile range is 1.0).

Learning Outcomes of The Music Curriculum for Student Development in The 21st Century:

According to the results, it is found that every learning outcome can develop the 21st century skills completely. The learning outcomes of the music curriculum for student development in the 21st century can be summarized as follows: 1) Ethics and Morals, students can be developed according to the principles and the frameworks of

the 21st century skills in terms of critical thinking and problem solving skills, understanding of different cultures and different paradigms skills, cooperation and teamwork skills, leadership skills, and profession and learning skills (interquartile range is 0.5) 2) Knowledge, students can be developed according to the principles and the frameworks of the 21st century skills in terms of critical thinking and problem solving skills, creativity and innovation skills, understanding of different cultures and different paradigms skills, communication skills, information and media literacy skills, computer, information technology and communication skills, profession and learning skills, and changing skills (interquartile range is 0.7) 3) Cognitive Skills, students can be developed according to the principles and the frameworks of the 21st century skills in terms of critical thinking and problem solving skills, creativity and innovation skills, communication skills, information and media literacy skills, profession and learning skills, and changing skills (interquartile range is 0.8) 4) Interpersonal Skills and Responsibility, students can be developed according to the principles and the frameworks of the 21st century skills in terms of critical thinking and problem solving skills, understanding of different cultures and different paradigms skills, cooperation and teamwork skills, leadership skills, and profession and learning skills, and changing skills (interquartile range is 0.9) 5) Numerical Communication and Information Technology Skills, students can be developed according to the principles and the frameworks of the 21st century skills in terms of Reading, (W)riting, (A)Rithmetics, creativity and innovation skills, communication skills, information and media literacy skills, computer, information technology and communication skills, and profession and learning skills (interquartile range is 0.8) 6) Psychomotor Domain, students can be developed according to the principles and the frameworks of the 21st century skills in terms of creativity and innovation skills, communication skills, information and media literacy skills, computer, information technology and communication skills, and profession and learning skills (interquartile range is 0.5).

RESULTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MUSIC CURRICULUM IN RAJABHAT UNIVERSITY

Course Structure

From the entire research processes obtained from the analysis, synthesis, and collection of data, it can be concluded that credits throughout the course shall be 121 credits with General Education no less than 30 credits. Music Education is 85 credits and Free Elective is 6 credits. Music Education shall be classified with Core Courses (3 Modules) 15 credits related to Music Historical Knowledge, Specialized Courses (4 Modules) 20 credits, Major Courses (8 Modules) 40 credits related to Music Theoretical and Practical Knowledge, Theory and Composition Courses (4 Modules) 20 credits, Skill and Performance Courses (4 Modules) 20 credits, and Work Integrated Learning (WIL) (2 Modules) 10 credits. This structure complies with the standards for undergraduate curriculum as announced by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation.

Learning Outcomes are divided into 6 areas, consisting of Ethics and Morals, Knowledge, Cognitive Skills, Interpersonal Skills and Responsibility, (Numerical Communication and Information Technology Skills, and Psychomotor Domain. Each area provides opportunities for each university to add its curriculum goals and identities and its uniqueness. Teaching and learning activities can be classified into 3 types: 1) activities that are integrated in each subject that gives instructors the freedom to choose and develop students according to the readiness of each university 2) activities that are organized in the curriculum to help promote and develop students into careers. This should focus on developing students according to the 21st century skills alongside and 3) university activities that promotes relationship between students in other departments and faculties, including external activities that course instructors should encourage students to have a variety of experiences so that these experiences can be useful in developing oneself in stepping into the profession with stability and efficiency.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION RESULTS

According to this research, the researcher discusses the results and comes up with the following issues:

Music Curriculum in higher education are currently widely available in different regions of Thailand. They have a similar curriculum structure and are consistent with the standards for undergraduate curriculum according to

the specifications from the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation. From this study, the details of the music curriculum structure are revealed. The similarities and differences of the music curriculum can be further analyzed from the philosophy of the curriculum, objectives, course structure, number of course credits, division of subjects, the total number of credits throughout the course including identity and uniqueness of the course. The study also shows that the curriculum structure should have an appropriate total credits throughout the curriculum of 120 credits or more according to the criteria to be in line with the local context that may be different according to the music curriculum in each region. Because the social context and community in the area are different in local culture, the focus and expectations of the curriculum are different. This is, the curriculum is consistent with the social context in that area, to answer the economic, social, labor and cultural needs of the local area, to create and develop the local population to have equal knowledge and abilities, and to promote local wisdom for benefits and create innovation or develop further to create productivity and added value for the local community. (Kachintorn, U., 2018) In addition, some music curriculum in higher education have content and activities that promote student development in the original teaching format that still holds the teacher as the center and emphasize results according to specified criteria. This may cause student development to not meet the current needs of society as it should be. This may affect the curriculum and those involved with the curriculum soon (Jam et al., 2018). This is because the curriculum has not been updated and is not in line with the social context that is always changing. Promoting student development in skills and knowledge that does not respond to professional needs makes the curriculum lack interest, no students, and the decrease in number of students. The curriculum may be terminated in the future. Therefore, the music curriculum in higher education must adjust the teaching processes to be in line with the current and modern social conditions. The music curriculum must not be an isolated curriculum; it must be integrated with other fields of study. (Dolprasit, S., 2021) The curriculum must be adjusted to have links and create networks with various divisions or organizations both internally and externally in order to exchange knowledge with each other, determine the competencies and skills necessary for learners, and meet professional needs and be able to expand further in the future. (Wangphanich, C., 2016) It also creates opportunities for students to practice professional experience along with direct learning that allows students to experience. To learn the role of entrepreneurs so that students can integrate knowledge into their work and experience from work to find new discoveries along with studying the content (Work Integrated Learning: WIL) from a real place and creating guidelines for stepping into the profession for students after graduation. (Suksaard, P. et al., 2018) Therefore, to make student development be in line with abilities and aptitudes of the students, instructors must gradually adjust new teaching concepts and processes or adjust them to a hybrid format in order to better respond to individual needs and always promote and stimulate students to learn, etc. From the study, it is also found that there are many courses that have been improved and developed in line with the changes to accommodate new things that will happen in the future. The curriculum has been improved to be more modern in terms of the curriculum philosophy, the course objectives, etc., such as adjusting unnecessary subjects or adjusting contents to be more modern, more emphasis on English communication skills, emphasis on learning paired with actual practice, focus on learning skills to step into the profession, emphasis on learning and access to a variety of information, and bringing music technology into play in teaching and learning activities. (Boonyanant, K. & Hongsiriwat, A., 2023) such as studying online through various applications or have work presented through online channels or social media, etc. These are new ways of life that combine to create innovative and new approaches to society that respond to the 21st century. (Thungkanai, K., 2021) In addition, there should be a form of curriculum management that is consistent with the context and potential of personnel by facilitating learners to receive educational opportunities and gain maximum benefits in their careers, including adjusting the curriculum to a credit bank system to be in line with individual problems and needs. It provides an opportunity for students to learn according to their potentiality, readiness, and interests without age restrictions and qualifications of students. It also promotes lifelong learning, creating course set as Modules, which is the management of teaching and learning as a set of courses. It is a blended learning method that can be learned both inside and outside the classroom. It emphasizes the importance of the learners and is self-learning. (Panthuwet, C., 2002) Therefore, to prepare the curriculum, teachers and various learning processes are important to transfer to students to be consistent in the 21st century. In terms of learning outcomes, higher education institutions aim to develop students according to the context of society and community. The

curriculum management guidelines obtained from this research can be developed to be appropriate for each institution. Taking into account the potentiality of personnel, the readiness of the institution to be consistent with the mission and direction of the institution, including the goal of improving the quality of that institution.

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