CHAPTER 16.

EXPLORING THE PIANO COURSE PROGRAM IN PRIVATE EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN TERMS OF ITS GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTENT[1]

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Many institutions in Türkiye provide training for playing an instrument. Some institutions offer vocational instrument training, and some provide specialized training. Institutions providing vocational instrument training are conservatories affiliated with universities, education faculties, faculties of fine arts, faculties of performing arts, and high schools of fine arts affiliated with the Turkish Ministry of Education. For admission to these schools, exams are conducted to measure music perception and musical aural skills. In addition to instrument training, there are courses in these institutions that teach different aspects of music, such as solfege, harmony, music theory, and music history. In addition to the technical elements of playing the instrument, it is necessary to be able to perform the music writing for the correct vocalization of the piece played. The names of notes, rhythmic elements, and various musical dynamics are taught within the scope of the solfege course. Individuals who read notes fluently can transfer this ability to their instrument and

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progress faster by focusing on technical studies. There is a 'Piano Course Program' within the Private Various Courses Framework Programs of the Directorate of Private Education Institutions affiliated with the Turkish Ministry of Education, which came into force with the decision of the Board of Education dated 18.09.2015 and with decision number 86 and signed by the Minister of Education, Nabi Avcı. The program's basis is the Law on Private Education Institutions, numbered 5580, the Regulation on Private Educational Institutions of the Turkish Ministry of Education, and the Private Various Courses Framework Program adopted with a board decision, numbered 72, dated August 14, 2015. This program is designed for individuals over the age of 6 who wish to study piano and pursue a career as a performer or educator. This program, implemented especially in big cities of Türkiye, takes place in private education institutions providing instrument education. Since the starting age of the program begins with primary school-age students, the suitability of the works and etudes selected for the curriculum has not been examined so far, and expert opinion has not been taken. By examining the content and topics of this program, which is carried out in many institutions in Türkiye, while preparing course programs, it was seen that there was a critical need to offer a proposal to improve the program and set an example for other studies. Therefore, the research problem statement was defined as: 'What is the nature of the Piano Course Program, approved by the Board of Education and Discipline, and included within the Private Various Courses Framework Programs under the Directorate of Private Education Institutions affiliated with the Turkish Ministry of Education?'. During the research, within the scope of the problem statement; the following sub-problems were tried to be answered.

1. What are the general features of the program?
2. What does the program cover in terms of the topics and content?

1.2. The aim of the Study

This study aims to examine the Piano Course Program approved by the Board of Education within the Private Various Courses Framework Programs of the Directorate of Private Education Institutions affiliated with the Turkish Ministry of Education.

1.3. Significance of the Study

The Piano Course Program is an 8-year program consisting of 16 semesters of vocational piano education, with an exam evaluation at the end of the year.

It allows students to teach as master instructors at the end of 8 years. In this program, the topics, works, methods, and books to be used are specified. The program is designed as 1-hour solfege and 1-hour piano lessons per week. This research is considered important in terms of being a source for further research and determining the dimensions of education and course programs.

1.4. Limitations

This study is limited to the documents examined as a result of the literature review and examination of the Piano Course Program approved by the Board of Education within the Private Various Courses Framework Programs of the Directorate of Private Education Institutions affiliated to the Turkish Ministry of Education.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research Design

This study, which was conducted to examine the Piano Course Program implemented in Private Education Institutions, is based on a content analysis, which is a qualitative research method. Content analysis is defined as a systematic, repeatable technique in which some words of a text are summarized into smaller content categories by coding based on certain rules (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, & Demirel, 2022, p.258).

2.2. Data Collection Tool

Within the scope of the study, the Regulation on Private Education Institutions, the Piano Course Program in the Private Various Courses Framework Programs, and related research were examined using document analysis.

2.3. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed and interpreted using the content analysis method.

Within the scope of the study, the Regulation on Private Education Institutions, the Piano Course Program in the Private Various Courses Framework Programs, and related research were examined using document analysis.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. General Characteristics of the Program

This program is included under the name of Piano Course Program, which takes place below the Talent Courses-Music Course Group in the table of Various Courses Teaching Programs Categories of the Turkish Ministry of Education Private Institutions Regulation published in the Official Gazette dated March 20, 2012 and numbered 28239.

With the decision of the Board of Education of the Turkish Ministry of Education dated September 18, 2015, and numbered 86, the "Piano Course Program" entered into force with the signature of the Minister of Education Nabi Avcı. The program is based on the Private Various Courses Framework Program, which was accepted on August 14, 2015, with 72 numbered Board Decision based on Law No. 5580 of Private Education Institutions Regulations of the Turkish Ministry of National Education.

The content of the program does not include any information on the qualifications of educators. Therefore, according to the Regulation on Private Education Institutions, educators are assigned in line with the principles of the Board of Education. Teachers are assigned according to the Schedule of Teaching Fields, Teacher Appointments, and Course Teaching Principles published by the Board of Education. They are assigned in this order of priority:

1. Those who are appointed as music teachers or those who are qualified to be appointed as teachers,
2. Graduates of higher education programs/faculties that constitute a source in the field of music,
3. Faculty members and lecturers working in higher education institutions that constitute a source in the field of music,
4. Those who have at least a high school diploma and have at least 1 year of piano education or have a certificate that they have given piano education

The duration of the program is determined as a total of 2 lesson hours, 1 solfege and 1 piano lesson per week, 33 weeks per year according to the weekly distribution of the program, and the course duration is 528 hours in total at 8 levels (Piano Course Program, 2015).

Within the scope of the legislation of the Turkish Ministry of Education, a practical exam is given to the trainees at the end of each level. At the end of the

course, a theoretical and practical exam is organized to measure the knowledge and achievements of the trainees within the framework of the program. The exam is evaluated by taking into account the relevant articles of the Ministry of National Education Regulation on Private Courses. Trainees who score at least 65 points out of 100 in the exam are given a "Course Completion Certificate" (Piano Course Program, 2015).

3.2. Aims of the Course

Trainees who successfully complete the Piano Course Program are expected to direct their mind and body development in an artistic sense by revealing their hidden talents, have basic music and piano knowledge, comprehend piano repertoire and techniques, follow the internationally recognized Czerny and Hanon piano methods for the acquisition and continuous improvement of piano playing technique during the training, recognize solo piano repertoire, play essential piano works, develop the ability to play with more than one instrument, acknowledge and play general chamber music repertoire which is significant for piano, and use the knowledge and experience gained during the education process as a performer or an educator in the music world.

3.3. Explanations on the Program Implementation

1. This program will create trainees' artistic knowledge by providing them with theoretical and intellectual knowledge about classical music and piano, and a holistic music education will be offered by transferring this knowledge into practice.
2. Attention will be paid to learning the subject in class. Methods and techniques such as from near to far, from easy to difficult, from national to universal, from known to unknown, analysis, induction, practice, and application will be used.
3. While organizing training activities, trainees will also learn to hear polyphony, play and sing together through chor-repetition, ensemble, chamber music, orchestra, musical aural reading, and writing (solfege) programs.
4. Trainees will be taught scales, arpeggios, or special working styles that will help them overcome the difficulties they will have in playing the technically difficult passages of the works they play in an easier and shorter way.

5. Through recitals, concerts, and performances held during and at the end of the training, the trainees will experience the feelings of being able to appear in front of the community, self-confidence, stage discipline, and stage excitement, and, accordingly, emotional control mechanism will be developed.
6. The rules of discipline in art will be taught to the trainees by making them feel and experience them during the training process, and their general success will be increased by transferring this teaching to their school and home life.
7. By raising awareness about the benefits and consequences of gaining the habit of repetition and practice through lessons and homework assignments, it will be mediated to apply this awareness to their artistic lives after the education process.
8. When necessary, experts and resource persons will be consulted in the lessons.
9. Level classes will be formed in the course according to the results of the placement test, which will be held at course registration.
10. At the end of each level, an exam is held. The course management gives those who are successful a level achievement certificate and students who are not proficient in a level repeat that level.
11. Classes are two hours, one branch lesson per week and one solfege lesson per week.

3.4. Topics Covered by the Program

When the content of the program was examined, it was determined that the introduction of the piano and its historical phases were included in the program to inform the trainees about the instrument.

The program aimed at aural training and position studies focuses on single- and double-tone perception exercises, right-and left-hand finger numbering, correct seating posture, proper arm positioning, correct hand placement, parallel note playing with both hands, practice of melodic pieces with right-and left-hand emphasis, teaching notes in the bass clef, and left-hand exercises.

The program content includes basic music terms such as Moderato, Largo, Andante, Staccato, Tenuto, Ritardando, Acciaccatura, and Tremolo. It also encompasses dynamic terms, including Crescendo, Decrescendo, Pianissimo,

Piano, Mezzopiano, Mezzoforte, Forte, and Fortissimo. Exercises focus on intervals, covering the study of seconds, thirds, fourths, fifths, sixths, sevenths, and octaves. Regarding rhythmic knowledge, instruction includes whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and corresponding rests, triplets, dotted half notes, dotted quarter notes, dotted eighth notes, and their respective rests. The program involves right- and left-hand practice in 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 time signatures.

As scale and arpeggio studies, respectively, the program includes Do major, Re major, La major, Mi major, Si major, Fa# major, Do# major, La minor, Mi minor, Si minor, Fa major, Fa# minor, Si major, Mi major, G# major, La major, Re# minor, La# minor, Re major, G major, Do major, F minor, Si minor, Mi minor, La minor, Chromatic scale, arpeggios of major and minor scales and dominant arpeggios.

The program includes C. Czerny's piano methods op.599, op.299, and op. 849 for etude studies.

For technical studies and practices Hanon Piano Method, Alexander Technique and Segmental technique are included in the program.

The program includes significant musical periods, composers, and works for piano literature. In terms of form knowledge, binary form, ternary form, sonata form, rondo form, fugue, theme, and variations are included.

The program includes Anna M. Bach Album, J.S. Bach Menuetto no.2, J.S. Bach Musette in D major, Bach 2 Voice Invention studies from the Baroque period, Clementi Rondo from the classical period, Chopin Valse in D# minor, Chopin Ballade, Schumann Youth Album from the romantic period and Saygun's İnci's Book as a Turkish work.

For sonatin and sonata studies; Clementi Sonatin in C major, Kuhlau Sonatin in C major, Beethoven Sonatin in G major, Mozart Sonatin in C major, Mozart Sonatin in F major, Clementi Sonatin no.4 in F major, Diabelli Sonatin in B major, Haydn Sonata in E minor, Beethoven Sonata no.1, Beethoven Sonata in G minor, Beethoven Moonlight Sonata are included in the program.

For concerto studies, the program includes the Haydn Concerto in D major, Beethoven 1st Concerto in C major, Bach Concerto in D minor, and Mozart Concerto in C major.

Poulenc Sextet for chamber music studies is included in the program.

Standard orchestra and opera solos and chorrepetition studies are also included in the program. The works to be studied for these topics are not specified in the program.

3.5. Program Content by Level

The content of the program by level is as follows:

Level 1: Introduction of the piano, position studies, aural studies, general knowledge of measurement, basic musical terms, basic nuance knowledge intervals and Czerny op.599.

Level 2: Scales and arpeggios, segmental technique, Czerny op. 599, Hanon, Anna M. Bach transcriptions, Clementi sonatinas, Schumann "Album of Youth" and Saygun "İnci's Book".

Level 3: Scales and arpeggios, Czerny op.299, Hanon, J.S. Bach Menuetto, Schumann "Youth Album", Kuhlau sonatin, Clementi "Rondo", Bach "Musette", Mozart sonata, Beethoven sonatin, Standard orchestral solos.

Level 4: Knowledge of piano literature and form, Beethoven sonatin in G major, Haydn concerto in D major, Czerny op.299, Beethoven concerto no.1, Clementi sonatin in G major, Poulenc sextet, Hanon, scales and arpeggios.

Level 5: Bach concerto in D minor, Hanon, Czerny op.299, Mozart sonata, Yann Tiersen "Amelie", scales and arpeggios, chromatic scale, standard orchestral and opera solos.

Level 6: Scales and arpeggios, Clementi sonatin, Bach 2-part invention, Czerny op. 849, Diabelli sonatin, Haydn sonata.

Level 7: Melodic minors, Beethoven sonata no 1 and sonata in G minor, Chopin ballade, Beethoven "Moonlight" sonata.

Level 8: Chopin waltz, Czerny op. 849, Alexander Technique, Beethoven concerto and Mozart concerto.

4. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The findings related to the first sub-problem of the research, which is to determine the general characteristics of the program, are as follows: It was determined that the program name is defined as "Piano Course Program." It was determined that the program's content does not include information on the trainers' qualifications; therefore, according to the Regulation on Private Education Institutions, trainers are assigned in accordance with the principles of the Board of Education. It is concluded that the qualifications of the people who would provide training as music teachers are stated in order of priority within the scope of the chart published by the Board of Education. The order of priority is stated as those who are qualified to be appointed as teachers, lecturers, lecturers who constitute

a source in the field of music, and those who have at least a high school degree and have at least 1 year of piano education or have a certificate that they have given piano education. Considering this finding, it is believed that differences will occur in terms of teaching when a music teacher, a sub-branch teacher, or a master teacher teaches as an educator. It is believed that if someone with at least 1 year of piano education can give lessons, the quality of the education will decrease. Similarly, Culuk (2022) stated in her study that academicians in the field of music would not accept the piano educator who can gain the right to be a piano instructor with only one year of piano education with documentation. Moreover, she adds that it would be a proper decision to remove article 4, which was changed with the authority's approval dated November 06, 2019 and 21871795.

According to the weekly distribution of the program, it is observed that there are 33 weeks per year and the course duration is 528 hours in total at 8 levels. In the implementation of the program, as mentioned above, it can be said that the total number of lesson hours decreased by half due to the absence of the solfege lesson. It can be said that the trainees' training period is incomplete for this reason. The solfege lesson includes note reading and singing. Therefore, it is considered very important for piano education. It is believed that the solfege lesson should be taught in order for the trainees to receive a holistic music education, to read the notes more fluently, and to analyze the theoretical structure of the works. It was determined that an exam is conducted in accordance with the relevant articles of the Turkish Ministry of Education Regulation on Private Courses. According to this regulation, the trainee must score 65 points out of 100 points in the practical exam in order to be successful, and the successful students are given a "Course Completion Certificate". Those trainees who receive a course completion certificate can continue the Piano Course Program at the next level. It is also considered significant that the trainees take a written exam in addition to the practical exam to measure their theoretical knowledge.

When the program's aims were examined, it can be seen that the trainees will achieve the following: direct their mental and physical development, have basic music knowledge, have basic piano knowledge, comprehend piano repertoire, comprehend piano techniques, acquire piano playing technique, and follow Czerny and Hanon piano methods. Considering the aims of the program, it was observed that the trainees cannot reveal their hidden talents, recognize the solo piano repertoire, play basic piano works, improve their playing skills, recognize and play chamber music repertoire, and use the knowledge they have acquired as interpreters and educators.

It is believed that the piano course program supports the mental and physical development of the trainees and enables them to create a systematic working order. Music, as an educational field, has features that ensure the development of human beings in terms of both mental and muscular aspects (Hancıoğlu, 2010). It is believed that systematic and goal-oriented work positively affects the trainees. It is assumed that the trainees do not have difficulty in the first 3 levels of the program, but from Level 4 onwards, due to the increasing difficulty of the works in the program, the trainees' motivation to play the instrument decreases, thus it negatively affects their mental and physical development.

It is believed that the trainees will have basic music knowledge and basic piano knowledge to a great extent. The inclusion of more composers in the program is considered important in terms of learning the piano repertoire. It is assumed that including works from each musical period in the contents of the levels will enable the trainees to have a better command of the piano repertoire.

Students who receive instrumental education, along with gaining the ability to play the instrument, also develop their collective music-making skills, tastes, and social aspects, and they can express themselves better as individuals (Öztürk & Özay, 2008:4). It was observed that collective music lessons, which are considered important for the development of trainees, are not practiced in the institutions. It was also found that there are no instructors in Private Education Institutions to teach lessons on playing instruments together and making music together. It is believed that trainees need a practice space in order to develop both individual and collective playing skills. For this reason, it is suggested that institutions should create both individual and collective practice areas and assign qualified instructors to teach the relevant courses.

When the levels of the program were examined, it was found that there are solfege and harmony course contents designed to enhance the trainees' auditory skills, as well as choral repetition and chamber music studies, which aim at improving trainees' ability to play collaboratively. Additionally, piano literature is included to help them acquire a deeper cultural understanding of piano playing, along with courses on orchestra and opera music. In examining the content of the program, it was determined that there are scale, exercise, and etude studies to develop piano-playing techniques, as well as studies focusing on the Baroque, Classical, Romantic periods, Turkish works, and musical terms to help interpret the pieces they play. The opinions of academicians teaching at the conservatory were obtained during the preparation of the Piano Course Program. It was observed that the works in the course content are technically and musically above the level of the trainees. It was seen that the trainees had difficulties in the face of this

situation, experienced physical and psychological difficulties, and had problems with their family and social environment. It is believed that this program, which is implemented in Private Education Institutions, should be transformed into a program that should have more lesson hours or into a more realistic program to be implemented together with instructors and music educators working in the field to be able to prevent problems that may occur. It was observed that the names of the works for chorrepetition, orchestra and opera solos were not specified, and only the Poulenc Sextet was included in the program for chamber music. It is believed that the trainees will not be equipped to carry out these studies within the program. It was observed that the trainees were only studying for the end-of-level exam and that they did not include collective music-making activities to a great extent.

Findings regarding the scope and content of the program are as follows: it was found that the program at Level 1 includes an introduction to the piano, historical stages of the piano, white keys on the piano, right-hand and left-hand finger numbers, auditory exercises (single voice, double voice exercises), sitting in the correct position, correct position of the arms, correct position of the hands, teaching 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4 measures, right hand and left-hand exercises with notes of different values, playing two-hand parallel notes, one, two, three, four-beat rest signs, teaching basic musical terms and symbols (Moderato, Legato, Ritardando, Largo, Andante), practicing right-hand and left-hand melodic pieces, C major scale with different rhythm patterns with 1 octave arpeggio, Czerny op. 599 Piano Method, different note values (dotted twos, dotted fourths, dotted eighths), teaching the notes in the key of F and left-hand exercises, teaching intervals (double, triple, quadruple, quintuple, quintuple, sextuple, seventh and octave) and practicing related pieces, teaching triole, teaching basic musical terms and nuance signs (Staccato, Tenuto, Multiplication, Tremolo, Pianissimo, Piano, Mezzopiano, Mezzoforte, Forte, Fortissimo, Fortissimo, Crescendo, Decrescendo), eighth notes, sixteenth notes. It is believed that the basic elements that need to be learned in the beginning stage of the piano are included at this level and that applying this program for the trainees is realistic.

At Level 2, it was found that the program includes segmental technical studies, teaching C major scale and arpeggio, Czerny op. 599 Piano Method, Anna M. Bach Album, deciphering studies, teaching la major scale and arpeggio, Schumann Youth Album, Clementi C Major Sonatin, Saygun "İnci's Book" work studies, Hanon Piano Method. Although it is thought that the technical and exercise studies at this level are suitable for the trainees, it is believed that the methods for Sonatin and work studies will be complicated for the trainees. Along

with the Clementi Sonatin in C Major, including small-scale simple sonatas in the program is considered more appropriate. In addition to Saygun's "İnci's Book" in the program, it is suggested that the works of other Turkish composers should be included at this level and in other levels according to their difficulty levels. It is believed that the inclusion of Turkish works in the program will improve the trainees both culturally and musically. It was observed that Schumann Youth Album is too difficult for trainees studying piano for 1 year. It is believed that it would be more appropriate to include this book at the next level.

At Level 3, it was found that the program includes Hanon Piano Method, Czerny op.599 Piano Method, J.S.Bach Menuetto No.2 Schumann Youth Album, Kuhlau Sonatin in C Major, teaching of E major scale and arpeggiation, Clementi Rondo, Bach Musette in D Major, Beethoven Sonatin in G major (G Minor) or Mozart Sonata in C Major, teaching of C major scale and arpeggiation, standard orchestral solos (Classical period, Romantic period, Contemporary period). It is believed that practicing the related tones together in scale and arpeggio exercises is more suitable for the musical development of the trainee. Although the majority of the works are considered to be suitable for this level, it is believed that sonata works are not suitable for this level. There appears to be a significant leap between levels 2 and 3 in this regard. After playing a few pieces in sonatina form, it is considered necessary to move on to sonata studies. When the program was examined, it was determined that the expression "orchestra solos" remained as a general definition and its content was not explicit. It is believed that the uncertainty will be eliminated by determining which orchestral works will be studied in the program.

At Level 4, it was found that the program includes piano literature (analyzing important periods, composers and works), teaching F sharp major scale and arpeggio, teaching C sharp major scale and arpeggio, Haydn Concerto in D Major, Czerny op.299 Piano Method, Hanon technical etudes, teaching la minor scale and arpeggio, Beethoven 1st Concerto in C Major, Beethoven Sonatin in G Major, Clementi Sonatin in G Major, form knowledge (double form, triple form, sonata form, rondo form, theme and variations, fugue), teaching mi minor scale and arpeggio, chamber music repertoire "Poulenc Sextet". Piano literature and knowledge of form are considered significant for a holistic music education. It is believed that it is necessary to include more explanatory content about this issue in the program. It is believed that in etude studies, Czerny op. 299 Piano Method is not suitable for this level, and before this method, Czerny op.849 Piano Method, which takes place in the program, is more appropriate. It was also observed that the teachers who participated in the study continued with Czerny op. 599 Piano Method at this level and continued with Czerny op. 299 Piano Method at the next

level. It was observed that concerto studies at this level were not performed. It is thought that large-scale works such as concertos are not suitable for this program. It is believed that sonatin or sonata studies are more appropriate for this level. It was seen that the only piece for chamber music in the program is Poulenc Sextet. It is believed that this piece is not suitable for both the level and the program.

At Level 5, it was found that the program includes teaching Bach Concerto in D Minor, Hanon Techniques Piano Method, Czerny op.299 Piano Method, teaching B minor scale and arpeggio, Mozart Sonata in F Major, teaching F major scale and arpeggio, Yann Tiersen Amelie, Standard orchestra solos, teaching F sharp minor scale and arpeggio, standard opera orchestra solos, teaching B flat major scale and arpeggio, chromatic scale studies. As stated above, it is believed that it is appropriate to include a concerto study in this program. Czerny op. 299 Piano Method is considered appropriate for this level, but it is suggested that it would be more appropriate to study Czerny op. 849 Piano Method beforehand. The inclusion of Yann Tiersen's Amelie in the exam evaluation is not considered appropriate in terms of evaluation. It is believed that a sonata or concerto's musical and technical elements are not included in this piece.

At Level 6, it was found that the program includes teaching Clementi Sonatin No.4 F Major, C sharp major scale and arpeggio teaching, E flat major scale and arpeggio, Bach 2 Voice Invention studies, Czerny op. 849 Piano Method, teaching G sharp major scale and arpeggiation, Diabelli Sonata in B flat major, teaching A flat major scale and arpeggiation, teaching D sharp minor scale and arpeggiation, teaching A sharp minor scale and arpeggiation, teaching A flat minor scale and arpeggiation, Haydn Sonata in E minor, teaching D flat major scale and arpeggiation, G flat major scale and arpeggio teaching, D flat major scale and arpeggio teaching, F minor scale and arpeggio teaching, B flat minor scale and arpeggio teaching, C flat minor scale and arpeggio teaching, correpetition studies, Mi flat minor scale and arpeggio. While there are concerto studies in the previous levels, it was determined that there are sonatin and sonata studies in this level. The statement in the explanation about the implementation of the program that education should go from easy to difficult contradicts the content of the program in this sense. It is suggested that it would be more appropriate to perform little preludes studies before practicing Bach's 2-Voice Invention. It was observed that correpetition studies at this level are mostly not practiced. It is considered necessary to arrange a suitable environment and lesson time for these studies.

At Level 7, it was found that the program includes la flat minor scale and arpeggio teaching, Beethoven Sonata No.1, melodic minor scales, Beethoven Sonata in G Minor, Chopin Ballade No.1, Czerny op.849 Piano Method, Beethoven

"Moonlight Sonata", correpetition studies, dominant arpeggios of major scales, dominant arpeggios of minor scales. It is believed that it can be more appropriate to work on Czerny op.299 instead of the piano method Czerny op.849 which takes place at this level. It was seen that the works at this level are consistent and at similar difficulty levels. It is suggested that especially works at each music period at high levels should be included in the program for musical development.

At Level 8, it was found that the program includes Beethoven 1st Concerto in C Major, Chopin Valse in C Sharp Minor, Czerny op.849 Piano Method, Alexander Technique, Mozart Concerto in C Major. It was observed that there are very few work options at Level 8, which is the end level of the program. As mentioned before, it is believed that works from every musical period should be included at this level. The trainee should present a program like a graduation concert in the exam. It is believed that it is not appropriate to include large-scale works such as concertos in the program.

Gün and Yıldız (2013) stated in their study that correct posture, sitting, and hand positions should be taught in the first stage of piano education because incorrect or incomplete placement of the posture, sitting, and hand positions can cause various physical discomforts if it becomes a habit over time. For this reason, learning the correct posture, sitting, and finger placement, which is the first stage of playing the instrument, is essential.

According to Gasimova (2011), scale and arpeggio learning is compulsory for developing technical skills in students. Scale and arpeggio studies in the program are considered necessary to be taught together with their related minors to ensure musical and technical development. Gasimova (2011) believes that etudes regulate hand movements and make the muscles between the bones in the palms flexible. She stated that etudes are not only works for acquiring technique, but also works for gaining the ability to play in various and regular vocal ranges. She noted that technical know-how is essential for conveying the content of the work. In Işıkdemir's (2017) study, piano educators who preferred Czerny op. 599 and Beyer methods for beginning piano education of 6-year-old children stated that they started their piano education with these books during their university years. Considering this opinion, it can be said that Czerny op.599, a book used in university education, is not suitable for students aged 6.

It was determined that only Carl Czerny's methods were used for etude studies in the Piano Course Program. Following a single composer's method in etude studies is believed to leave the trainees' development incomplete. For this reason, increasing the number of composers is considered important for the trainees' development.

Çelik Nayır (2018) concludes in her study that the teacher should consider a number of elements, including the student's ability, grade level, prior etudes and works played, and willingness to practice the piano. She underlines that the learner should gradually advance from their current level, with their weaknesses identified and suitable etudes and works should be selected in accordance with their level, age, and personality characteristics.

The suitability of the methods used as materials in piano teaching is important for the student, and therefore, the learning areas, level, and age group of the students should be taken into consideration when choosing a piano method. Considering this, it is suggested that the piano educator should analyze the piano method that he/she will use as teaching material well and ensure that it is in line with the behaviors observed according to the features of the method (Bayırlı, 2022). In terms of method selection, it is believed that each method may have strengths and weaknesses, and therefore it would be appropriate to follow more than one method, taking into account the student's readiness and personal differences (Savaş Ceyhan, 2023). It was determined that the selection of methods according to the student and student's level, which Bayırlı and Savaş Ceyhan drew attention to in their research, were the elements that teachers drew attention to in the results of the Piano Course Program. It is believed that a standard education cannot be provided in the Piano Course Program due to the lack of a certain age range. It is believed that increasing the options of methods, works and technical studies in the level content would be more productive for the trainees and course teachers. It is also believed that playing large-scale works such as sonatas and concertos in the program is difficult during the program and that the program content should be lightened in this regard.

Suggestions

1. It is suggested that the statement in the Board of Education's relevant table be revised, which states that individuals serving as instructors on the program must have received one year of piano training or have provided piano training may result in individuals who are not competent in the field of music giving instruction.
2. Trainees who complete the program will plan their careers as trainers or commentators. Considering that music education is holistic and comprehensive, it is believed that there will be a significant difference between individuals who graduate from music departments and complete their academic competencies and trainees completing the program. Since there is no content in the program for education courses, it is recommended that this statement be removed from the program.

3. Although it is included in the program, it has been observed that 1 hour of solfege lesson is not given in the institutions. It is suggested that theoretical courses such as solfege and harmony, which are included in the course content of the program, should be considered as a separate course and their content should be determined in a separate program.
4. It is suggested that the subjects of form knowledge and piano literature, which are interspersed in the content of the program, should be taught within the scope of solfege lessons as a course on its own.
5. It is believed that the content of this program, which aims to provide basic music knowledge and basic piano knowledge, should be revised accordingly.
6. It was determined that the course contents of correpetition and chamber music, which are included in the general explanations about the implementation of the program, are not included in the program. It was observed that the only work belonging to the field of chamber music is Poulenc Sextet. It was observed that the instructors qualified to conduct chamber music and correpetition lessons are not employed in the institutions. For this reason, it is recommended that the statement that chorrepetition and chamber music studies will be conducted be removed from the program.
7. It is recommended that the program be re-prepared so that the trainees can recognize and play the piano repertoire.
8. It is recommended that music educators, piano pedagogues, and academicians working in university piano departments take part in preparing the Piano Course Program.
9. When the content of the program was examined, it was found that the levels were inconsistent both among each other and within themselves. The inclusion of a concerto, sonata and sonatin in the exam evaluation within the same level was not found to be appropriate in terms of evaluation criteria. For this reason, it is suggested that the content of the program should be arranged in a way that the levels progress from easy to difficult considering the age criteria, composers should be diversified, works from every period should be played, a guide book should be compiled in accordance with the content of the program, and the works that the trainees will play in the exam should be selected by their own teachers.

10. Increasing the number of Turkish composers' works in the program is recommended for the trainees to get to know their own culture and for cultural development.
11. It is suggested that the criteria for the exams at the end of the level should be determined and criteria should be added to the program.
12. It is believed that the teachers assigned to the exam should be competent in the field of piano and have knowledge about the content of the program. For this reason, it is recommended that the teachers who come for the exam should be assigned from the relevant field or the course teachers should conduct the exam.
13. It is recommended that the knowledge of the trainees be evaluated through theoretical and practical exams.
14. It is recommended that exams be standardized.
15. It is recommended that the Piano Course Program should be organized based on international education programs.
16. By examining the internationally implemented training programs and exam programs, it is recommended that the online exam option be offered to trainees to reduce financial costs.
17. It is recommended that the undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate certificate programs after Level 8 in international exams be examined and a similar program be created to support the development of trainees in instructing.

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