

## RESEARCH ON THE COMPARISON OF MUSIC CURRICULUM STANDARDS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF CHINA AND MALAYSIA

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### ABSTRACT

*In general, the primary school music curriculum standard is a teaching guiding program document that stipulates the nature, objectives, contents, and implementation suggestions of the primary school music curriculum. This research compares and analyzes the music curriculum standards of primary schools in China and Malaysia from the structural framework, objectives, and contents of the curriculum standards. Through a comparative analysis, it is found that the two countries have similarities and differences in the structural framework, objectives, and contents of curriculum standards. Based on the results of comparison and analysis, the following four suggestions for the improvement and development of music curriculum standards in compulsory education in China have been put forward: Firstly, the goal of "reading and writing music score" should be clearer. Secondly, the proportion of "performance" content needs to be increased. Thirdly, the "practicality" of the content should be further strengthened. Lastly, the content of "glossary" shall be increased in the appendix. This research is aimed to provide references for the official developers of primary school music curriculum standards in China and deepen the understanding of Chinese and Malaysian music education, and make up for the deficiencies in the comparative research of Chinese and Malaysian music education. However, the limitation of the research is that there is no interview with policymakers. Because of this, the background of the formulation of curriculum standards in the two countries is not thorough enough. Thus, researchers hope that the future research can make up for this deficiency.*

Keyword : China; Malaysia; Primary school music; Standard for curriculum

### INTRODUCTION

In this research, China and Malaysia are the neighboring countries in Asia. Since the establishment of the diplomatic relationship, the bilateral relationship between the two countries has gradually entered a comprehensive, stable, and pragmatic development track. The proposal of "The Belt and Road" initiative and the organization of the "China-ASEAN Educational Cooperation Week" event have brought new cooperation to the education cooperation of China and Malaysia, which not only provides a new platform for the exchange of education between the two countries, but also promotes frequent cultural and educational exchanges between the two countries. Music education is no exception. With the convening of the 27th and 29th "International Society for Music Education World Conference" in Kuala Lumpur and Beijing in 2006 and 2010, the exchange and cooperation of music education between the two countries have gradually entered a new stage of development. At the beginning of the development of primary school music education in China and Malaysia, both followed the European music education system. Due to the differences in cultural backgrounds, the development paths of primary school music education in the two countries are both similar and different in their characteristics. Therefore, the two countries also have much valuable experience in the development of primary school music education curriculum standards.

The Music Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2011 Edition), hereinafter referred to as MCSCE, was issued by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China in 2012 as a revision of The Music Curriculum Standard for Full-Time Compulsory Education (Experimental Draft) issued in 2001. According to the physiological and psychological characteristics of students' development, the nine-year learning time in the stage of compulsory education is divided into three periods, including Grade 1-2 of primary school for the first school section, Grade 3-6 of primary school for the second school section, and Grade 1-3 of junior middle school for the third school section. Since 2011, Malaysia has revised The Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah (hereinafter referred to as KSSR) and implemented it level by level. At the same time, each grade uses a separate curriculum standard. KSSR consists of two levels. To be specific, the first level for Grade 1-3 of primary school (also called "art education") is composed of "music education" and "visual art". Furthermore, the second level for Grade 4-6 of primary school only includes the content of music education, and mainly focuses on the cognitive development and skill training of students in this field.

At present, there are some gaps in research on the comparison of the music curriculum in primary schools between China and Malaysia. Taking KSSR and MCSCE as the main research object, this paper not only compares and analyzes the text structural framework, objectives, and content of the curriculum standard, but also explores the similarities and differences, as well as respective characteristics between the primary school music curriculum standards of the two countries. Through this research, researchers hope to provide references for the official developers of primary-school music curriculum standards in China, offer a reference to improve primary-school music curriculum standards in China, deepen the understanding of Chinese and Malaysian music education, make up for the deficiencies in the comparative research of Chinese and Malaysian music education, and enrich the research results of music education theory in China.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this study is to find out the differences and similarities based on the comparative analysis of the text structural framework, objectives, and content of the music curriculum standards of the primary schools in China and Malaysia, and to analyze the respective characteristics between the music curriculum standards of the primary schools in China and Malaysia.

Specifically, there are main objectives:

- (1) To identify the respective characteristics in the structural framework of the primary school music curriculum of the China and Malaysia;
- (2) To identify the respective characteristics in objectives of primary school music curriculum of China and Malaysia;
- (3) To identify the respective characteristics in the content of the curriculum standard of the primary school music curriculum of China and Malaysia.

## RESEARCH QUESTION

- (1)What are the respective characteristics in the structural framework of the primary school music curriculum of China and Malaysia?
- (2)What are the respective characteristics in objectives of the primary school music curriculum of China and Malaysia?
- (3)What are the respective characteristics in the content of the curriculum standard of the primary school music curriculum of China and Malaysia?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Although there are no achievements of comparative research on music curriculum standards in primary schools between China and Malaysia, there are still many kinds of research related to this topic, which is roughly as follows:

Firstly, in terms of the comparative studies between countries, Pei Lulu (2021) selected the current music curriculum standards of primary schools in China and England as the research object, and used literature research, text analysis, and comparative study method to compare and analyze their curriculum standards. Besides, Meng Lu (2018) compared the 2014 edition of the UK's "Music Curriculum Standards for Primary and Secondary Schools" and the 2011 edition of China's "Compulsory Education Music Curriculum Standards" for research. In addition, Qi Le (2008) chose the "full-time compulsory education music course standard" and Japan's "primary and secondary school music learning instructors" as the object, made a comparative analysis of its curriculum objectives and content, and proposed some teaching suggestions for curriculum implementation. Obviously, these studies are all about the research of music curriculum standards in primary schools between countries.

Secondly, in terms of the comparative studies between regions, from the perspective of music curriculum content and curriculum objectives, Guo Xiaolin (2014) mainly compared four music curriculum standards including the Music Curriculum Standard for full-time Compulsory Education in Mainland China (2011 edition), The Nine-year Consistent Arts and Humanities Curriculum Outline for National Primary and Secondary Schools in Taiwan (1997 edition), and the Music Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 to Secondary 3) in Hong Kong (2003) and Macao Primary Education Music Syllabus (Primary 1 to Primary 3) (1999 edition). Besides, Cao Jingxie(2014) took the music curriculum standards of Shanghai, New York, and England as the comparison objects, sorted out the music curriculum standards of the three places, studied the existence of music ontology in the curriculum standards, and verified the necessity of ontology regression. It can be seen that these studies are all about the research of music curriculum standards in primary schools between regions.

Thirdly, in terms of the comparative studies in China, Shen Jing (2021) selected the music Curriculum Standard for Compulsory Education (2011 Edition) and the Art Curriculum Standard for Compulsory Education (2011 edition) to compare the nature of the courses. Beyond that, Zhang Xiaodang (2015) compared the 2001 and 2011 editions of compulsory education music curriculum standards from two aspects of curriculum objectives and curriculum content, and reflected on the controversy of the 2011 edition of curriculum standards. Besides, Han Caifeng (2007) reviewed the music curriculum syllabus in the contemporary history of China, compared the music classroom teaching before and after the implementation of music curriculum standards, analyzed the problems existing in the implementation process of music curriculum standards in rural areas, and proposed corresponding countermeasures. Obviously, these studies are all about the research of music curriculum standards in primary schools in China.

Lastly, in terms of the comparative study between China and Malaysia, Yang Wenting(2015) compared solfeggio teaching between Hunan Normal University and the University of Malaya from the teaching objectives, textbook selection, and teaching process. In terms of the Malaysian studies, Chan Cheong Jan and Kwan Shwu Shyan(2010) investigated the implementation of music in public kindergartens in Malaysia from three aspects: musical activities, teachers' perception, and self-efficacy. Apart from that, Swee-Foong Liao (2018) explored the factors influencing the effectiveness of the KSSR Arts Education and contributed some valuable information for identifying strengths and weaknesses in the implementation of the Arts Education in the KSSR curriculum at the primary school level. It can be observed that these studies are mainly about the comparison of solfege teaching in Chinese and Malaysian universities, the investigation of preschool music education in Malaysia, as well as the research of the implementation of KSSR in primary schools.

To sum up, abundant achievements have been made in the comparative study of primary school music curriculum standards in China and abroad. On the one hand, there are domestic comparative studies between China and the United States, China and

Britain, and China and Japan. On the other hand, there are comparative studies between mainland China, Hong Kong China, Macao China, Taiwan China, and other regions, the comparative studies between different versions of music curriculum standards in China, as well as comparative studies on solfeggio teaching between China and Malaysia. In Malaysia, studies on the implementation of art curricula in primary schools and music education for children are also conducted. It can be seen that although there are abundant research results on primary school music education in China and abroad, the comparison of music curriculum standards between China and Malaysia is not specifically researched. Therefore, it provides a good opportunity for the topic selection of this study.

## METHODOLOGY

The objects of this study are "The Compulsory Education Music Curriculum Standard (2011 Edition)" promulgated by The Ministry of Education of China in January 2012 and the "Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah" currently applied in Malaysia. The research not only compares and analyzes the text structure framework, objectives, and content of the curriculum standards of the two countries, but also explores the similarities and differences between the music curriculum standards of the two countries. Through quantitative comparison and qualitative analysis, it also investigates the number of text frame content items, overall objectives, stage learning objective items, content items, and the proportion of each part.

### Comparison of text structure framework of curriculum standards

Text structure framework refers to the structure content of text. Indeed, MCSCE consists of 13 contents, such as nature, basic concept, design ideas, overall objective and learning stage objective of curriculum. Meanwhile, it can be divided into four parts of preface, course objectives, course contents, and implementation recommendation. KSSR (taking the fourth-grade music curriculum standard as an example) consists of 15 contents, including national principle content, national education philosophy, music education curriculum, overall objective, primary school music education curriculum objectives, and subject focus. According to the classification of MCSCE text structure and the specific situation of KSSR text structure, it can be divided into preface, introduction, teaching evaluation, Grade 4 music education, and Appendix 5 (see Table. 1).

**Table 1: Text Structural Framework of Curriculum Standards in China and Malaysia**

MCSCE		KSSR (Grade 4)	
Part I: Preface	1.Nature of curriculum 2.Basic concept of curriculum 3.Design ideas of curriculum	Part I: Preface	1.Content of national principles 2.National education philosophy
Part II: Course objectives	4.Overall objective 5.Learning stage objective	Part II: Introduction	3.Music education curriculum 4.Overall objective 5.Curriculum objectives of music education in primary school 6.Subject focus 7.Content organization 8.High-level thinking skill
Part III: Course contents	6.Feeling and appreciation 7.Performance 8.Creation 9.Music and relative culture	Part III: Teaching evaluation	9.Teaching evaluation
Part IV: Implementation recommendation	10.Teaching suggestions 11.Evaluation recommendations 12.Suggestions on textbook compilation 13.Suggestions on the development and utilization of curriculum resources	Part IV: Grade 4 music education course	10.Grade 4 music education objective 11.Module 1: Music experience 12.Module 2: Music creation 13.Module 3: Music appreciation 14.Module 4: Reading and writing notes
		Part V :Appendix	15.Glossary

### Comparison of overall goal of curriculum standard

"Curriculum objectives are the concrete embodiment of school curriculum value as well as the result display of curriculum stage and particularity (Working Committee E.B. E. C. and T. M. M. E., 2012). To be specific, the curriculum goal of MCSCE consists of an "overall objective" and "stage learning objective". The overall objective is that "students can explore, discover and appreciate the artistic charm of music, cultivate their lasting interest in music, cultivate beauty, harmonize body and mind, cultivate sentiment,

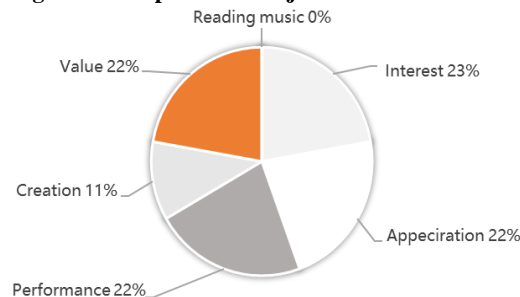
improve personality through learning music course and participating in various artistic practice activities, learn and master the necessary basic music knowledge and skills, expand cultural vision, develop music listening and appreciation ability, performance ability and creativity, form basic music literacy, enrich an emotional experience, develop good aesthetic taste together with positive and optimistic life attitude, and promote the healthy development of body and mind". Apart from that, the overall goal is expressed from the three dimensions of "emotion • attitude • values", "process and method" and "knowledge and skills". From abstract to concrete and from macro to micro, it is a systematic objective with a hierarchical structure, and the objective is focused more on people's all-around development.

The overall objective of the first level (Grade 1-3) art education curriculum of KSSR is that "Primary school art education aims to cultivate students with artistic knowledge and skills, make them harmonious, critical, creative and innovative people, have artistic and aesthetic awareness of different cultures, further increase their gratitude to God, and appreciate the beauty of the natural environment, art and national heritage". Furthermore, the overall objective of the second level (Grade 4-6) is that "the primary school music education curriculum aims to cultivate creative talents with knowledge and ability to appreciate and enjoy music through music activities". Obviously, the curriculum objective of the KSSR is focused on the mastery and application of knowledge and skills, as well as the improvement of appreciation level and the cultivation of innovation and critical ability, with more emphasis on the learning of music ontology.

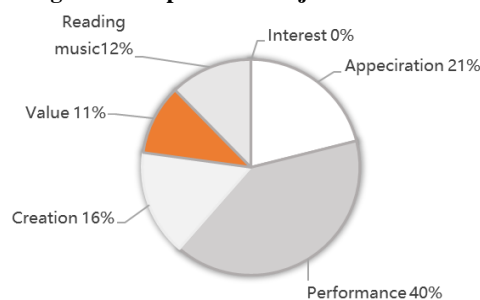
**Comparison of objective text entries in the learning stage**

The first and second learning stages (Grade 1-6) of the MCSCRs curriculum learning stage objectives contain 9 content items. Meanwhile, there are 57 content items in Grade 1-6 of KSSR "curriculum section objectives". In order to better compare the curriculum objectives of MCSCR and KSSR, the primary school music curriculum objectives are uniformly divided into six objectives according to the specific classification of music teaching content and the objectives of the standard text division of primary school curriculum in China and Malaysia: "Interest", "Appreciation", "Performance", "Creation", "Reading Music Score" and "Value" (see "Figure 1" and "Figure 2" for the proportion of each part).

**Figure 1: Proportion of objective items of the MCSCE**



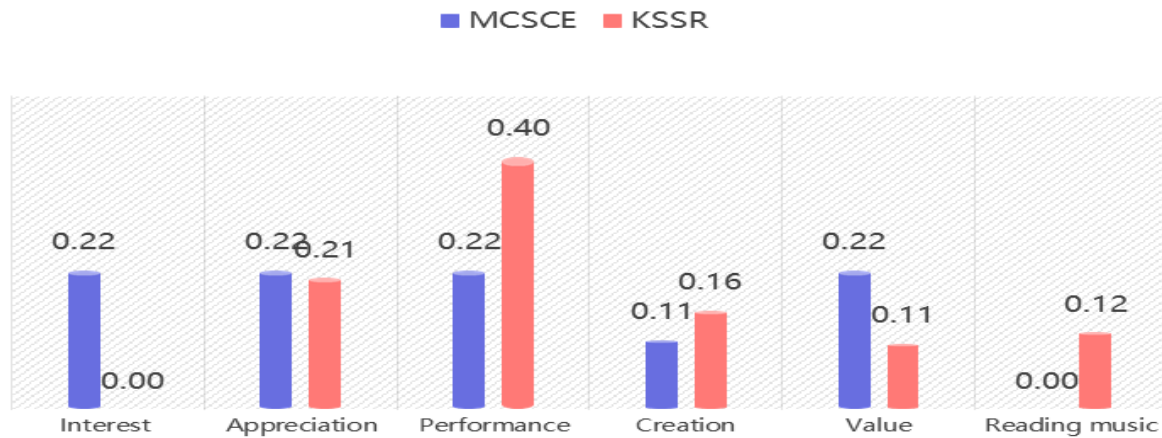
**Figure 2: Proportion of objective items of KSSR**



**Comparison of the distribution of objective text items in the learning stage**

Based on the unified division of the above objectives, the text items of MCSCE and KSSR objectives are classified and counted (see Figure 3), where the two standards have the biggest difference in the "performance" objective. MCSCE has 2 relevant text content items, accounting for 22%, while KSSR has 23 relevant text content items, accounting for 40%, which is nearly twice that of MCSCE. Secondly, regarding the proportion of "appreciation" and "values" target text items, the proportion of "appreciation" and "values" in MCSCE is both "22%", while the proportion of "appreciation" and "values" in KSSR is "21%" and "11%" respectively. Obviously, the proportion of MCSCE in the number of "values" target text items is much higher than that of KSSR, whereas the proportion of "appreciation" objective text items in the two countries is almost the same. In terms of the "creation", there is 1 relevant text entry in MCSCE, accounting for 11%, and 9 relevant text entries in KSSR, accounting for 16%. It can be observed that both MCSCE and KSSR attach great importance to the creative ability. Finally, there is no target text item of "reading music score" in MCSCE, while there is no objective text item of cultivating "interest" in KSSR.

Figure 3: Classification statistics chart of proportion of goal text items in standard courses of China and Malaysia



**Comparison of curriculum standard content**

**Comparison of course content items**

There are 75 text content items in the first and second learning sections (Grade 1-6) of "course contents" in MCSCE. Moreover, it consists of "Feeling and appreciation", "Performance", "Creation" as well as "Music and relative culture", and the proportion of each part is shown in "Figure. 4". Besides, there are 142 text content items in Grade 1-6 of "course content" in KSSR. The first level (Grade 1-3) contains 67 items in total. In addition, the course consists of four modules: "Art language", "Art skills", "Creativity and Innovation" as well as "Art appreciation", and the proportion of each part is displayed in "Figure 5". There are 75 items in the second level (Grade 4-6), which is composed of four modules: "Music experience", "Music production", "Music appreciation", and "Music reading and writing" (see "Figure 6" for the proportion of each part).

Figure 4: Proportion of content items of MCSCE

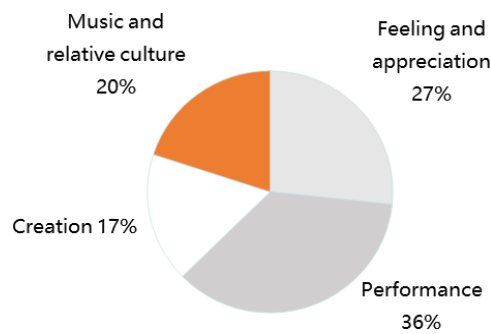


Figure 5: Proportion of curriculum contents of grade 1-3 of KSSR

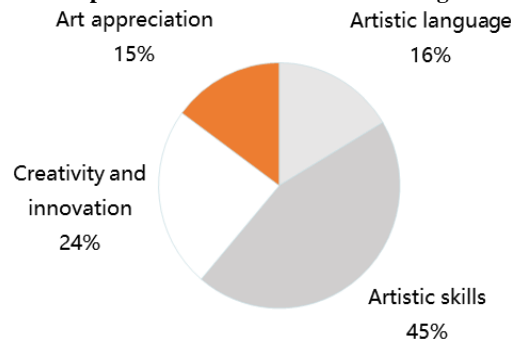
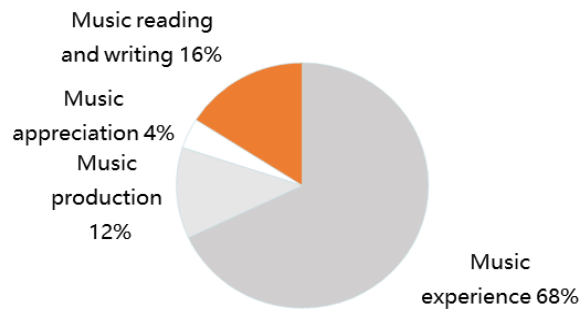


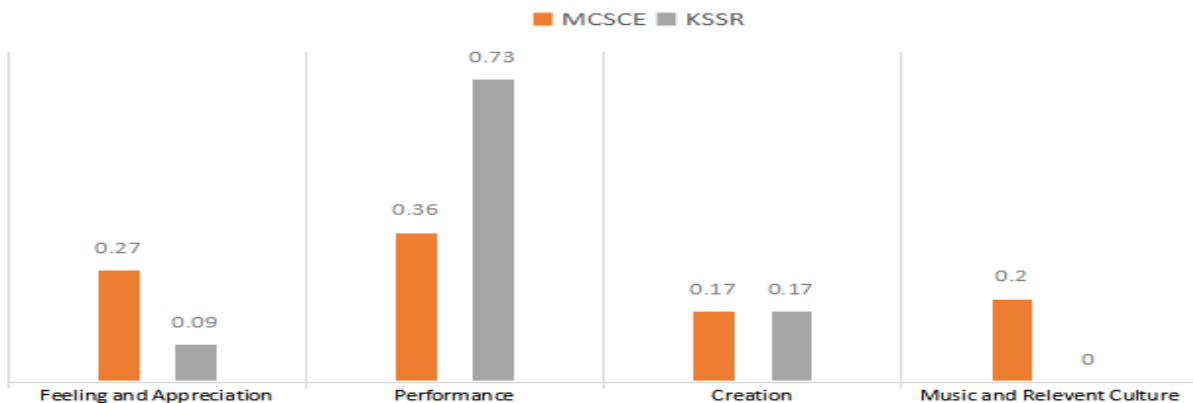
Figure 6: Proportion of curriculum content of grade 4-6 of KSSR



In order to better compare the curriculum text content and distribution between MCSCE and KSSR, according to the specific classification of music teaching content in MCSCE and the fields divided by KSSR text content, the music curriculum content of primary schools in the two countries is divided into four fields: "Feeling and appreciation", "Performance", "Creation", and "Music and Relative culture".

Based on the unified division of the above contents, the content items of MCSCE and KSSR are classified and counted for the second round (see Figure 7). Among them, the two standards have the biggest difference in the field of "performance". There are 27 relevant content items in the text of curriculum standards in MCSCE, accounting for 36% of the total. Meanwhile, there are 105 relevant content items in the KSSR text, accounting for 73% of the total, which is more than twice that in the MCSCE. Second, it is the field of "feeling and appreciation". There are 20 relevant content items in MCSCE, accounting for 27% of the total. Moreover, there are 13 relevant content items in KSSR, accounting for 9% of the total. In the field of creation, the proportion is 17%. However, there is no corresponding content in the KSSR in the field of "music and relative culture". Obviously, MCSCE pays more attention to the content of "feeling and appreciation" and "music and relative culture", while KSSR focuses more on the teaching of "performance" content.

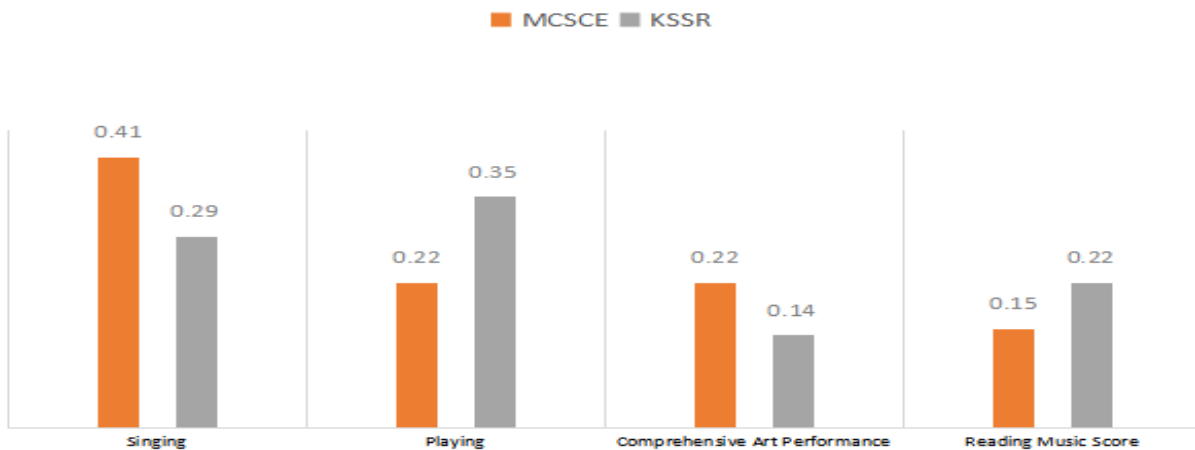
Figure 7: Comparison of course content distribution between MCSCE and KSSR



In order to better compare the content and distribution of "performance" between the two countries, the "performance" field is divided into "singing", "performance", "comprehensive art performance" and "reading music score" (see "Fig. 8" for details). In the field of "performance", MCSCE and KSSR have the biggest difference in "singing" and "playing", with a percentage difference of 12% and 13%. At the same time, unlike MCSCE, there is the part of "value", which is related to performance and singing, but does not contain specific values knowledge.



Figure 8: Content distribution of "performance" field in MCSCE and KSSR



## RESEARCH RESULTS

### The respective characteristics of text structure framework of curriculum standard

Based on the comparison of the text structure framework of primary school music curriculum standards between MCSCE and KSSR, this research found that their text structural framework has the following characteristics.

In terms of the structural framework, the similarities between the two standards are as follows: Firstly, in the preface of the two standards, the nature and concept of the curriculum are explained. Secondly, both the standards of the two countries describe the curriculum objectives in general and in sections, while the objectives of the KSSR are more detailed and have specific requirements for each grade. Finally, they include "Appreciation", "Creation" and "Performance" in the course content, and give some suggestions on the implementation of "Classroom Teaching Evaluation". However, there are slight differences in expression.

In terms of structural framework, the differences between the two standards are as follows: Firstly, there are great differences in text structural content. MCSCE is composed of 4 parts of 13 contents, while KSSR is composed of 15 contents. Secondly, the curriculum standard content of the two countries is different for the range of grades. To be specific, MCSCE is for 9 grades in primary school and junior middle school, whereas KSSR is mainly for primary school. The curriculum standard of each grade is independent with Grade 7-9 in junior middle school, and primary school and junior middle school are separated from each other. In addition, MCSCE also gives implementation suggestions on teaching, textbook compilation, curriculum resource development and utilization, which are not included in the KSSR. Finally, the appendix "glossary" in part 5 of the KSSR defines the music terms appearing in the music curriculum in this academic year, but there is no such part in the MCSCE.

### The respective characteristics of curriculum standard objectives

Through the comparison of the total curriculum objectives, the number of items of stage learning objectives and the distribution of items in the target text between MCSCE and KSSR, this research found that there are the respective characteristics in the following aspects.

First, Both MCSCE and KSSR pay attention to the cultivation of "creative ability". The proportion of "creative ability" cultivation in the goals of MCSCE and KSSR is "11%" and "16%" respectively, and the proportion is basically the same. In the first stage (Grade 1-2), MCSCE puts forward "participating in improvised editing activities". The second stage (Grade 3-6) proposes "cultivating artistic imagination and creativity". By contrast, in the first stage (Grade 1-3), the KSSR proposes to "create creative works of art using various resources and technologies". Besides, in the second stage (Grade 4-6), it proposes to "cultivate creative musical thinking through activities such as singing, rhythm and musical instrument performance". Obviously, both MCSCE and KSSR have different requirements for the cultivation of students' creative ability at different ages, and both pay great attention to the cultivation of students' creative ability.

Second, MCSCE pays attention to the cultivation of "value" more than KSSR. The proportion of "value" in MCSCE is "22%" while that in KSSR is "11%". MCSCE puts forward to "cultivate an optimistic attitude and friendly spirit". In the second stage (Grades 3-6), MCSCE also puts forward the requirements of "enhancing collective awareness and cultivating cooperative ability". KSSR puts forward "practicing good values through a series of artistic activities". Obviously, MCSCE pays more attention to the cultivation of students' values, collective consciousness, and cooperation ability, and the goal is higher. By contrast, KSSR emphasizes the cultivation of values by practice.

Third, Both MCSCE and KSSR pay attention to the teaching of "music appreciation". The proportion of "appreciation" in MCSCE is "22%", while that in KSSR is "21%". In the first stage (Grade 1-2), MCSCE proposes to develop the perception of music and experience the beauty of music. In the second stage (Grade 3-6), it proposes to "cultivate the ability of music feeling and

appreciation, and initially develop good music appreciation habits". From the "development and experience" to the "cultivation and preliminary cultivation", the goal has distinct stages and levels. KSSR puts forward "appreciating the aesthetic value of various works of art" in the first stage (Grade 1-3). In the second stage (Grade 4-6), it is proposed to "enjoy different types of music and make oral evaluation on the heard music from various elements of music". It can be observed that MCSCE focuses on the cultivation of "perception", "experience" and "appreciation habit" of music, while KSSR pays more attention to "the richness of the source of artistic works" and "music evaluation". Obviously, there are obvious differences in the emphasis of music appreciation between the two standards.

In addition, MCSCE pays attention to the cultivation of "interest in music", while KSSR pays attention to the cultivation of "reading and writing music scores". The proportion of "interest" in MCSCE is "22%". The first stage (Grade 1-2) requires "stimulating and cultivating interest in music", and the second stage (Grade 3-6) requires "maintaining interest in music", and changes from "stimulating and cultivating" to "maintaining", which is progressive and logical. By contrast, the KSSR has no specific requirement on the cultivation of music interest. However, KSSR has separate specific requirements for "reading and writing music score". In KSSR, the number of "reading and writing music score" texts accounts for "12%", but there are no specific requirements for "reading and writing music scores" in MCSCE.

Finally, KSSR emphasizes the goal of "performance". The proportion of "performance" text items is "40%", while the proportion of "performance" text items in MCSCE is "22%". In terms of the quantity, KSSR pays more attention to the "performance", and the proportion of text items is nearly twice that of MCSCE. Among the specific requirements, MCSCE requires singing naturally and expressively and participating in other music performances in the first stage (Grade 1-2), and singing confidently and expressively and being willing to participate in performance and other music performances and creative activities in the second stage (Grade 3-6). It can be seen that the requirements are constantly improved. MCSCEs requirements for music "performance" ability go step by step, which not only requires the ability to use knowledge and skills, but also has different requirements for the ability of each stage. Apart from that, the KSSR puts forward "the understanding of artistic language, knowledge and skills and their application in artistic practice". Obviously, the KSSR focuses more on the understanding and application of music.

### **The respective characteristics of the content of the curriculum standard**

Based on the comparison of the content of curriculum primary school music standards between MCSCE and KSSR, this research found that their curriculum content structural framework has the following characteristics.

Firstly, KSSR's content division is more detailed and pays more attention to the content of "performance" than MCSCE. In terms of the number of entries, there are 75 standard content entries in MCSCE, while there are 142 standard content entries in Malaysia. Meanwhile, the number of standard content entries in Malaysia is nearly twice that of MCSCE. It can be seen that the content division of KSSR is more detailed. Taking the "performance" field contained in the standards of the two countries as an example, this study found that there are 27 contents in the "performance" field in MCSCE, accounting for 36% of all the contents in the first and second learning stages. By contrast, there are 105 content items in the field of "performance" in Malaysia, accounting for 73% of all content items in Grade 1-6, indicating that KSSR pays more attention to the content of "performance" than MCSCE.

Secondly, MCSCE pays more attention to the content of the "feeling and appreciation" field and "subject integration". There are 13 items in the field of "feeling and appreciation" in KSSR, accounting for 9% of all items in Grade 1-6. By contrast, there are 20 items in the field of "feeling and appreciation" in MCSCE, accounting for 27% of the total items in the first and second learning stages. Apart from that, the number of items in the field of "feeling and appreciation" in MCSCE is not only three times that of KSSR in percentage, but also quickly catches up with the proportion of "performance" field (36%), indicating that MCSCE pays more attention to the content of "feeling and appreciation" field. In MCSCE, there are 15 contents in the field of "music and relative culture", accounting for 20%. Nonetheless, there is no such content in the KSSR. Obviously, MCSCE pays more attention to subject integration.

Finally, KSSR pays more attention to the teaching content of "playing" music, while MCSCE pays more attention to the teaching content of "singing". MCSCE's "singing" content items account for 41%, while KSSR's "singing" content items account for 29%. In addition, MCSCE's "playing" content items account for 22%, while KSSR's "playing" content items account for 35%. Obviously, the proportion of "singing" content items in MCSCE is higher than that in KSSR, while the proportion of "playing" content items in KSSR is higher than that in MCSCE. Compared with MCSCE, KSSR pays more attention to "reading and writing music scores". The number of content items in KSSR's "reading and writing music score" accounts for 22%, and there are specific requirements for music literacy in each school year. MCSCE's "reading and writing music score" content accounts for 15% and there is only a rough requirement for each stage of learning.

### **DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTION**

Based on the result of the comparison in the text structural framework, curriculum objectives, and curriculum content of MCSCE and KSSR, four suggestions are put forward for the MCSCE reform in China.

Firstly, the objective of "reading and writing score" in MCSCE should be clearer. Although the requirements of "reading and writing music score" are mentioned in the general goal of the MCSCE, they are not put forward in the goal of the learning stage. By contrast, the KSSR has certain requirements for "reading and writing music scores" in both "general goal" and "learning stage goal". Reading and writing music score, as an indispensable basic part of music education, has an important impact on improving



students singing, performance ability, and appreciation level. Therefore, a clear understanding of the learning objectives of "reading and writing music score" in MCSCE should help guide teachers' teaching and improve students' overall music literacy.

Secondly, the proportion of "performance" content in MCSCE needs to be increased. The number of content items in the "performance" field in MCSCE is 27, accounting for only 36% of the total. However, the number of content items in the field of "performance" in KSSR is 105, accounting for 73% of the total, which is more than twice that in MCSCE. The field of "performance" is mainly about music ontology, such as "singing", "performance" and "comprehensive art performance" and "reading music score". As pointed out by Cao Jingxie, "only by returning to the ontology can music education truly reflect the value of music education and achieve a more benign development. Moreover, only by returning to the ontology can music education attain the goal of school basic education". Therefore, it is necessary to increase the proportion of "performance" content in MCSCE so as to make music better return to the ontology.

Thirdly, the "practicality" of curriculum content in MCSCE needs to be further strengthened. In the nature of MCSCE, it is proposed that the nature of music curriculum is mainly reflected in "humanity", "aesthetics" and "practicality". At the same time, it is suggested that "the teaching in various fields of music curriculum can be implemented only through multiple practical forms, such as listening, singing, performance, comprehensive artistic performance and music editing". Among the course objectives, the first overall objective is "emotion • attitude • opinion about value". In the course contents, the proportion of practical "listening, singing, playing, comprehensive artistic performance and music editing" is 80%, while the course content in KSSR is practical content of "listening, singing, playing, comprehensive artistic performance and music editing". Compared with KSSR, the proportion of "practical" course contents about music in MCSCE is not high. Thus, it is important to further increase the practical course content so as to reduce the proportion of non-practical teaching content.

Finally, the content of the appendix "glossary" can be added to MCSCE. The glossary will explain and define all music terms that appear in the music course of this period or the academic year. At present, this part is not included in MCSCE, and it is set in the standards of all grades in KSSR. Notably, the addition of "vocabulary" is favorable to better guide the compilation of teaching materials, teachers' teaching, and students' learning. Therefore, adding an appendix "glossary" to MCSCE will better guide the implementation of the music curriculum in primary schools.

## CONCLUSION

To conclude, this research has compared and analyzed the texts of the music curriculum standards of MCSCE and KSSR in terms of text structural framework, curriculum objective, and curriculum content. Based on the results of the comparison and analysis, four suggestions are put forward. Through this research, the researcher hopes to provide references for the official developers of MCSCE, deepen the understanding of Chinese and Malaysian music education, make up for the deficiencies in the comparative research of Chinese and Malaysian music education, and enrich the research results of music education theory in China. At the same time, this research has many shortcomings, such as the lack of interview with policymakers and primary music teachers. Therefore, the study of the problem is not thorough enough. It is hoped that the future research can make up for this deficiency.

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