



Research on Relationship between Occupational Pressure and Job Satisfaction of Piano Teachers in Professional Colleges and Universities

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ABSTRACT

With the rapid development of the economy in China, the colleges and universities have also gained a rare opportunity for its development. The trend of economic globalization has sped up the development process of the economy, legal system and the construction of culture in China, and has also put forward higher requirements for music education in colleges and universities. Piano teachers in Professional Colleges and Universities is not an easy job, as the piano teachers have a large number of daily class hours, a heavy teaching load, and have to participate in various performance and activities organized and held by their schools. At the same time, through the time is not enough, the piano teachers shall also focus on research and academic studies. The conflict between "teaching" and "research" makes teachers in Professional Colleges and Universities undergo the excessive work pressure, which reduces individual job satisfaction and leads to depression and reduced efficiency of some piano teachers. Job satisfaction is an important indicator to stabilize the faculty and prevent brain drain. In recent years, there is still a large gap in the literature studying piano teachers' pressure in Professional Colleges and Universities, so that it becomes especially important to analyze the sources, influencing factors and characteristics of their job pressure and explore the relationship between the job pressure and job satisfaction, and this paper studies and puts forward several suggestions to enhance teachers' motivation and improve teaching quality. It is believed that more and more experts and scholars will join the research, and the results will become more and more abundant. In such a case, the sense of pressure undergone by the teachers will be reduced, and the teachers' job satisfaction will surely be improved.

Key Words: Piano Teacher; Occupational Pressure; Job Satisfaction

I Preface

The job pressure has been seen as the "flu of the 21st century". Thus, the job pressure plays an important role in damaging people's health, and the high degree of pressure can reduce the sense of well-being [1]. Since the beginning of the 20th century, a lots of Western countries have been focusing on the research of the job pressure. Initially, the term "job pressure" originated in field of medicine, and then the "job pressure" is gradually used by various disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and management. According to a large number of domestic and international data, it shows that teachers are universally facing with the pressure, and that the position of teacher is a highly knowledge-intensive and stressful profession. Upon entering into the professional life, people mostly become organized survivors in a specific professional environment. The adjustments and changes carried out in the external environment and within the organization are beyond the intervention of individuals, resulting in disruptions to their established personal career plans, work settings, and daily life status. Such kind of uncertainty factor will convert into the emotional value on the basis of the variability of each individual's stress-bearing capacity and coping strategies, which directly affects the satisfaction with the job. Pressure is a double-edged sword because the position of "teacher" is held to a high expectation by society and undertakes the important task of developing the talents for the nation. The moderate stress can stimulate teachers' passion and enthusiasm for their work, while the excessive pressure directly affects teachers' physical and mental health and teaching quality, and also has indirect harmful effects on schools and society. In a questionnaire on occupational pressure of teachers in colleges and universities, Pan Xin found that 80% of teachers feel stressed for a long time, 75% of the total number of teachers working in colleges and universities often feel fatigued, and 46% of the total number of teachers often suffer from insomnia and sleeplessness. [2] In general, lots of scholars are now beginning to focus on this area of teacher pressure, but the studies in terms of the occupational pressure of disciplinary faculty are quite limited, not to mention the researches in connection with the job pressure suffered by the piano teachers working in Professional Colleges and Universities.

After 1999, the expansion of enrollment has made more and more students realize their dream for attending colleges or universities, and on this basis, the colleges and universities have realize the development in a leapfrog way. But then, the pressure suffered by the colleges and universities is getting heavier and heavier. Although the financial departments at all levels have increased their investment in professional colleges and universities, it is far from meeting the actual demand brought by the expansion of enrollment. The basic piano education is a fundamental subject among various music

disciplines as well as a required course in music education. It is a subject that may be set up for almost all students who are in vocal music majors, dance majors, wind music majors, and solfeggio and ear training majors, and it also is the subject with the largest number of students and the longest amount of teaching time. In professional colleges and universities, the traditional model of individual lesson education is almost always used to enable teachers to teach each student in a targeted manner on the basis of his or her individual situation. However, the existing situation in colleges and universities is “more students but less teachers, resulting in a small teaching coverage and a waste of resources. Teaching with the individual lesson format requires a large number of piano teachers, but it is impossible to add= so many piano teachers at once, which requires adding the heavy lesson load to each existing teacher, and this overload pressure leaves teachers without enough time to live. This has led to a decline in job satisfaction, causing burnout among more and more piano teachers in professional colleges and universities. This paper selects the piano teachers of Xi'an Conservatory of Music as the research objects, analyzes the current situation of job pressure suffered by the piano teachers in professional colleges and universities, explores its causes and proposes corresponding countermeasures, taking into account the actual situation of music education in the general colleges and universities.

II Research Results and Analysis

In this paper, 34 piano teachers from Xi'an Conservatory of Music among which 14 piano teachers are the male and 20 piano teachers are the female, were selected as the subjects for the research. For each item to be measured, the questionnaire method was used to investigate the percentage of teachers' sense of pressure, and the results are shown in the table

Items to be valued	No Pressure	Light Pressure	Middle Pressure	Higher Pressure	Greater Pressure	Proportion (Above the Higher Pressure)
Improvement of teachers' business ability	11	18.4	33.8	25.9	11	36.9
Heavy scientific research tasks	5	12.5	25.7	30.3	26.5	56.8
Large teaching workload	3	25.4	31.6	21.1	19	40.1
Title evaluation conditions	10.7	7.5	20.6	26.5	34.6	61
Existing tenure system	8.6	23	15.1	28.9	24.3	53.2
Increased requirements for academic qualifications	19.1	19.3	22.6	27.9	11.2	39.1
Lack of interest of students in learning	4.6	19.3	36.4	30	9.6	39.6
Complicated interpersonal relationships	20.1	19.4	35	20	5.5	25.5
Salary and benefits	10.5	18.5	28.9	18.6	23.5	42.1
Society's expectations and demands on teachers	5.5	18.6	36.4	20	19.5	39.5

As the data shown in the table, the main sources of stress are the professional title evaluation, scientific research tasks, current appointment system and teaching workload. The factor which ranks the top position is professional title evaluation. With the management of colleges and universities becoming more and more standardized and institutionalized, the evaluation reference requirements in terms of the teachers are getting higher and higher, and the limited indicators in professional colleges and universities are very tight, leading to the fierce competition. A large number of teachers have been insist on being the lecturer for multiple years but fail to be promoted to the associate professor and professor for a long time. In such a case, such teachers may lose their satisfaction on a gradual way and even generate an idea of “to be promoted or to eave”. In the second place, the factor is the heavy task of scientific research. In the fierce development and competition of universities in all aspects, the strength of scientific research has become one of the important benchmarks. In essence, the task of scientific research is to make the application for projects and the publishing of papers. The level of application for projects and publication of papers is closely related to the workload on scientific research. With the huge workload of professional piano teachers, such heavy workload on scientific research has undoubtedly become a new pressure that add insult to injury, leading to a sharp decline in teachers' satisfaction with their jobs. As seen in the table, there is less pressure in terms of interpersonal skills. Because of their cheerful and talkative personalities and active thinking, most of the teachers in the technical specialty are able to resolve themselves in an reasonable way in case of any conflict in connection with individual interpersonal relationships.

III Cause of Factor

3.1 Factor At the State Level

The expansion of the colleges and universities is an important measure to promote the implementation of the education action plan, which improves the quality and innovation ability of the whole nation, and thus drives the implementation of the international competitiveness of the country. The

expansion of the colleges and universities has also provided the opportunities for access to education for a wide range of students. The enrollment rate of the students in the high school have been increased in a significant way, giving students who originally perform flatly in the high school but have a skill and musical interest the opportunity to further their professional abilities through their studies at colleges and university. However, the blind expansion of enrollment has created a shortage of educational resources. The infrastructure facilities and equipment in the colleges and universities are not sufficient (such as shortage of piano rooms). As the students in piano majors, 6 hours of practice time per day is a daily routine. However, due to the expansion of enrollment, the piano rooms are not enough to accommodate for the students to carry out the practice, and in such a case, the teachers' piano rooms are almost always arranged for students to practice outside of the time they have to use in class, which seriously takes up the teachers' self-study time; and the national financial education funds invested in is short (the opportunities for teachers to learn will be reduced). The piano is a Western instrument, and it is an essential way to invite various pianists to the colleges and university for organizing and holding the concerts and lectures to improve the teaching process. It is also important for teachers to be able to exchange and share their knowledge across the whole country to improve their teaching skills in a rapid way. Due to the shortage of funds, almost all teachers who want to get more opportunities to learn and improve themselves almost always pay out of their own pockets to enrich their business skills. This also leads to teachers' dissatisfaction and resistance to school and work; the unreasonable allocation of teachers in colleges and universities (the lag of the growth rate of the teaching force), the enrollment rate of professional colleges and universities is gradually increasing every year, yet the growth rate of the educational resources fails to keep up with the growth rate of students, and the appointment index given to colleges and universities by the state seriously fails to keep up the enrollment rate of the students, which makes lots of external teachers making lots of contribution in their posts for multiple years but failing to get the treatment they deserve. Young teachers, in particular, who work with a lot of enthusiasm and spend a lot of time, fail to obtain their reward that should obtain, resulting such teachers in low mood. In such a case, they have the idea of job burnout and leaving the position.

3.2 Factor At the School Level

The school is the support for teachers' work and life, and the factors such as the academic environment and management system mechanism of the school will directly affect the formation of teachers' occupational pressure and satisfaction with their jobs. Music is a new knowledge structure without standard answers, so that each teacher has his or her own individual feature in handling music according to his or her own preferences, personality, and style, and sometimes slightly disagree with others' ways of handling music. This has led to the delicate nature of interpersonal relationships among teachers, and thus in lots of colleges and universities, the bad ways and customs are formulated with disputes between interior schools and open and secrete strife among teachers. This causes teachers to be in the midst of long-term psychological burdens and conflicts because of their different positions and standpoints, which leads to emotional exhaustion. With the deepening of the reform of university education system, the competition for jobs not only requires the professional skills, but also the reasonable maintenance of relationships with colleagues and leaders, which is easy for teachers who are dedicated to academic research and have poor adaptability to gradually generate the sense of the resistance; the initiatives such as students' selection and evaluation for teacher make a lot of music teachers are fearful because many of their students are unevenly qualified, and their skills and knowledge of music theory are still lacking. This requires the piano teachers to devote more time and effort to the teaching of their profession. The long term overload and the monotonous working environment make teachers lose their patience, and the fact that they have to be evaluated by their students, whose performance is almost always related to the evaluation of their teaching level, adds a lot of psychological burden to the piano teachers.

3.3 Factor At the Individual Level

In the public perception, most teachers in the colleges and universities do not have to work in the "nine to five" limited period and have two long vacations each year, which makes them feel very relaxed. In reality, however, they are overworked and have a relative low salary. Because it is an academic job, the teachers need to spend a lot of time outside of work to study and learn, as well as to be exposed to more knowledge from other disciplines to enrich their teaching skills and knowledge. In addition to the rapid development of society, the students are able to access the Internet and receive more knowledge from the Internet. The students have their own unique opinions through a lot of appreciation of various works and self-study, and the composers and works they often like and want to study are not always well known to the piano teachers and can easily cope with. In such a case, it is necessary for the piano teachers to constantly keep learning on the part of the teacher to keep up with the students. Most of the piano teachers are female and they take more social roles than only to be a teacher. The pressure of teaching, carrying out scientific research and worrying about the changes in work life also affect the physical and mental health of such female teachers to some extent. Most female are more conflicted in handling the relationship between career and family, which to a certain extent affects the normal teaching process; due to the speciality of the profession, most of the piano teachers have cheerful temperament, fashionable and freedom-loving personalities. However, due to their roles and identities, they often need to deal with problems in a controlled and repressed way in their normal work and life, and there are psychological and behavioral contradictions and conflicts; at the same time, there are also differences in each person's personality and psychology, and some teachers are not able to properly deal with the contradictions and conflicts in their lives and work, resulting in unhealthy psychology such as easily annoyed and irritable.

IV Conclusion and Discussion

First, it shall build a harmonious teaching environment, create a atmosphere of respecting teachers and valuing education in the whole society, and safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of the teachers. The whole society needs to pay more attention, deliver more concern, provide more support and offer a more proper cooperation to colleges and universities. The government should further increase the financial investment in the education for professional colleges and universities, improve the salary and treatment of teachers, alleviate the decline of job satisfaction of piano teachers in colleges

and universities due to the imbalance of income and psychological expectation of social status, and actively help the teachers solve the existing problems and improve the social recognition of professional teachers so that they can devote themselves to the cause of higher education with more enthusiasm.

Second, it shall strengthen the teachers' self-psychological regulation. A series of objective problems such as heavy teaching tasks and difficult teaching and research tasks are long-standing. Escaping such issues is not the way to solve them. On the contrary, the teachers should bear a high sense of responsibility for their career. They should adjust their mindset to treat students well and try to be their mentor and friend. The teachers shall also constantly absorb the most cutting-edge knowledge to enrich themselves, as well as apply the knowledge and theories in respect of psychology to the students to understand the psychological activities of students and help them to better complete their studies. The improvement of teachers' psychological quality directly affects the teaching attitude of the teachers, and a good mindset can cultivate excellent artistic talents.

Third, it shall optimize the management system of the colleges and universities. Education and teaching cannot be carried out without teachers, and the subjective initiative of teachers directly affects the quality of teaching in schools. The colleges and universities should establish an effective communication mechanism, be people-oriented, and pay full attention to the practical difficulties encountered by each teacher. This humanistic management model can maximize teachers' motivation, reduce unnecessary pressure, enhance the teachers' on the job, and ultimately form collective cohesion. The colleges and universities shall carry out various activities to enhance mutual interaction among teachers; provide teachers with the necessary development opportunities such as further training, listening to lectures and taking part in the artistic practice to provide an effective guarantee to relieve the professional pressure of piano teachers.

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