

**A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS'
ATTITUDES TOWARDS CONTEMPORARY
MUSIC IN GUANGXI ARTS UNIVERSITY IN
NANNING, CHINA**

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**CULTURAL CENTRE
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR**

2017

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2017

UNIVERSITI MALAYA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the students' attitudes toward contemporary music in university. A sample of 100 music students from Guangxi Arts University in Nanning, China participated in this study. The survey designed for this study contained a set of questions that investigated on the students' attitudes toward the contemporary music. The data analysis included descriptive statistics, T-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) to evaluate the music students' attitudes. In general, the findings revealed that the attitude scores did not differ significantly by gender and music courses that have been taken in university, but was found to differ significantly by music students' years of music learning experience. Implications for contemporary music learning and research were discussed in this paper. Recommendations for further investigation were included.

Keywords: University music students, Attitudes, Contemporary music, China.

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menyiasat sikap pelajar terhadap muzik kontemporari di tahap universiti. 100 pelajar muzik dari Universiti Kesenian Guangxi telah menyertai kajian ini. Tinjauan yang dicipta untuk kajian ini mengandungi soalan-soalan untuk menyiasat sikap pelajar terhadap muzik kontemporari. Data analisa merangkumi *descriptive statistic*, *T-test* dan *analysis of variance* (ANOVA) untuk menilai sikap pelajar muzik. Secara umum, pencarian membuktikan skor sikap pelajar tidak mempunyai perbezaan yang ketara dari segi jantina dan kursus utama yang diambil di universiti. Namun, skor sikap pelajar menunjukkan perbezaan yang ketara bagi pelajar yang mempunyai tahun pengalaman mempelajari muzik yang berbeza. Implikasi untuk muzik kontemporari dan kajian dalam bidang tersebut telah dibincangkan dalam kertas ini. Cadangan untuk kajian yang boleh dilakukan pada masa depan berdasarkan tajuk tersebut juga disertakan.

Kata kunci: Pelajar muzik universiti, sikap, muzik kontemporari, China

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all who had given me assistance in my research.

First, I am extremely thankful to my supervisor Dr. Wong Kwan Yie and Dr. Chiu Ming-Ying who guided me through the journey. Your patience to guide, advices and suggestions for every single subject had helped me to learn and develop better research.

Thank you Dr. Loo Fung Ying and Dr. Yap Jin Hin who given me helpful suggestions and advices. Thanks to Dr. Michael Edward Edgerton too, for helping out during my fieldwork in Guangxi Arts University.

I would like to also thank Ms. Khoo Wan Ru and Ms. Juthamard Thongsodsang for helping me in my thesis. Thank you Ms. Yan Jun Huang for providing help when I collect literature review in Guang Xi.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the problem

Music is a widespread cultural phenomenon, particularly for adolescents. Since early 20th century, Western music has become a part of Chinese urban musical life, constituting a central element of musical entertainment and the standard music education (Rao, 2002). According to Vitale (2011), “most of music teachers whether in public or private music schools are trained in Classical music, and school music curriculum has typically favored Classical music” (p.1). Therefore, many schools’ curriculums focus on the learning of Western classical music. Ho (2002) stated that, “Musical styles taught in school are also confined to the traditional musical learning of Western and Chinese music and its discursive construction” (p.212-213).

Shen (2004) investigated Chinese music, and he found that Chinese music in the 20th century, westernization has made a de facto victory. In a study conducted by Zhang (2003), shows Eurocentric influence is more profound in school music curriculum, ignoring the theoretical system of Chinese music.

The value of traditional music could not be doubted but the attempting to accept new, controversial and challenging ideas was also of great importance (Bimberg, 1987). McCarthy & Goble (2002) emphasized that music and the philosophy of music education must go beyond the Western art tradition, taking into account the various forms of musical practice. Kelly (2012) states “education should be a process of

fostering freedom of mind, not accepting the status quo” (p.10).

Nowadays, Chinese universities are actively exploring on how to use the new arts education model to improve traditional arts education and have a better understanding of contemporary music, which can not only stimulate the performance of contemporary music at all levels but also can help students to think critically in music education classes. Most colleges and universities are making some innovations; but there is still no clear pattern that can be practiced in action (Liu, 2011).

However, what the contemporary music has faced is quite ambivalent in China. Even though there is a steadily increasing number of composers, performers, musicologists, producers and journalists in this area, it is still very slow for the general public to accept contemporary music. Most of them are more inclined to accept traditional and classical music.

In the early stage of Chinese contemporary music development (1979-1985), music composition mainly employed modern Western composition. Some composers who are full of innovative ideas tried to breakthrough limit of the traditional techniques, such as Zhu Jianer, Tan Dun and others.

In the late 1980s, contemporary music has entered a period of comprehensive development. More specifically, composing technique was showing more diversified pattern, but the biggest difference compared to the previous period is that the composers

had basically completed the study of modern Western composition techniques, and no longer met the imitation. They tried to create their own techniques. For example, Zhao Xiaosheng created the *Tai Chi Composing System* in his book entitled *Book of Changes* and also wrote a piano music *Tai Chi*.

After 1989, music critics for contemporary music have a lot questioning and negation, such as “what is the music?” “Aren’t all nature and human sounds music?” “Is silence music?” and “What is the main role of music?”

In 1990s, The development of China’s contemporary music encountered a market-driven period. Numerous contemporary music works were published. For example, young music composer Qinwen Chen wrote nearly twenty works including *He yi*, *Huaisha*, *Ji zhixiang*, and *Pipa Ci*. Also, Liu (2011) introduced his first personal album, which opened up the precedent of contemporary music market in China.

Studies about university students’ attitudes towards contemporary music are still relatively limited. There are previous studies that investigate contemporary music, but most of them specifically look at the creative technique of contemporary music and music genres, such as *Introduction to Contemporary Music* by Joseph Machlis and *The World of Twentieth Century Music* by David Ewen. There were also a number of studies involving contemporary music’s treatises, such as Yu Runyang’s *Modern Western Music Philosophy’s Introduction* and Song Jin’s *Western Music - from Modern to Postmodern*.

As for the impact of contemporary music on university students, most of them are for general students rather than music majored students, such as *Investigation Study Of College Students' Exploring On The Learning Of Modern Music* by Liu Ying (2011) and *Consider The Non-Music-Majored University Students Study And Argue About Contemporary Music's Value* by Cao Rong (2007). Therefore, it is essential to examine the music majored students' attitudes towards contemporary music.

1.2 Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to examine the students' attitudes towards the contemporary music in China, and to investigate the suitability of teaching of contemporary music in Chinese universities. Considering the purpose of this study, several research questions were served to guide this study.

1.3 Research Questions

- 1) What are the differences between male and female students' attitudes towards contemporary music?
- 2) What are the attitudes among university music students with different years of music learning experiences towards contemporary music?
- 3) What are the differences of attitudes towards contemporary music between the students who major in music theory and music performance?

1.4 Definition of Terms

Contemporary music: contemporary music is a very broad category, based on

various dictionaries and encyclopedias, contemporary music can be defined in seven ways at the very least (Xu, 2010). But in this study, it refers to the music in time period from 1990 to the present. Mainly referring to the arts music, popular music does not include. It also refers to the new ideas in compositional techniques that are different from the previous era.

Attitudes: Attitude is the stable psychological tendency of an individual to a particular object (person, idea, emotion, event, etc). Meyers (1993) for the definition of attitude is a kind of like for something or someone or not like evaluation of the response. But in this study, it refers to the university music students evaluation of contemporary music.

University students: In this study, it refers to the undergraduate and postgraduate students in music majors (including composition, music education, and music performance) in Guangxi Arts University in Nanning, China.

1.5 Significance of the study

Since the school's curriculum focuses on Western classical music and traditional Chinese music, university students are mostly exposed to classical music, folk music and popular music, which make very few students understand contemporary music. Thus, it is essential to understand university students' attitudes towards contemporary music and to give a reference for better implementation of contemporary music courses in the university.

Through the survey, the researcher is able to know university students' attitudes towards contemporary music. Moreover, the analyses and summaries to the survey will improve teaching quality, teaching methods, and the advanced development of contemporary music education in China. Meanwhile, this study also can provide reference materials and relevant information for other researchers in this field as well as contemporary music education.

1.6 Assumptions of the study

Assumptions to this study are shown as follows:

1. All participants in this study will respond to the questionnaires honestly.
2. Reliable results can be obtained by using a survey questionnaire.

1.7 Limitations of the study

1. This study was limited to the Guangxi Arts University, China (广西艺术学院).
2. This study was limited to music majored students.
3. This study did not distinguish between undergraduate and graduate students.
4. This study did not take into account of age differences.

1.8 Summaries and Organization of the Thesis

Chapter 1 introduces the problem, the purpose, the research questions, the significance, and the limitations of the study, as well as delimitations, assumptions, and the definition of terms.

Chapter 2 includes a review of related literature concerning the history of Chinese music education, the aesthetic ability and contemporary music.

Chapter 3 reports the procedures used in this study, including the description of methodology, the design of study, and the questionnaire.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study.

Chapter 5 shows a summary of the study, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research.

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Music Education in China

In this chapter, reviews on articles regarding history and development of music education in China, aesthetic education and contemporary music in China were made. History and development of music education in China and the influence of aesthetic education were important to visualize the status of contemporary music in China. Western music had tremendously influenced the development of contemporary music in China. Avant-garde music and scores were brought into China from the West, causing a rise in appreciation and creation of contemporary music by the locals.

2.1.1 Education in Ancient Chinese Music

Being one of the ancient civilized nation, China has a farfetched history and is rich with an abundance of musical resources. Its recorded musical history is more than a span of 8000 years (Fan & Xie, 2007). Song, dance and instrumental music are some of the aboriginal music in China. Among the three, singing and dancing occupied a very important position (Yu, 2010).

During the 11th century BC and 221 BC, music education was mostly taken up by the children from the noble families. However, there were also a few young people from the non-governmental sector taking up music education. There was also an age limit to learn music in China, and people between thirteen to twenty years old and above are not encouraged to pursue music. As for the educational content, it included music ideology,

performances, dance, instrumental performances and others (Yu, 2010).

Beginning from 551 BC to 479 BC, Confucius attached great importance to music education. He believed that music could make a person achieve the highest level of his/her essential. Besides Confucius, Mencius (372 BC to 289 BC) also advocated people to appreciate music as a whole rather than being alone (Yu, 2010).

Furthermore, in the Tang dynasty, Emperor Li Shimin (599 AD – 649 AD) believed that there was no difference between sorrow and joy in music. Instead, it was the different feelings from people that matters. This means to say, optimistic people will naturally feel happy while pessimistic people will feel sad even though they are listening to the same music. Therefore, all the sorrow and joy of a person is genuinely related to a person's feelings rather than the music itself (Yu, 2010).

In addition to that, a musical institution was set up near the *jinyuan*'s pear garden in the royal court during the 714 AD by Emperor Tang. The main purpose of this musical institution was to teach music composition and there were more than three hundred musicians who were personally guided by Emperor Tang himself in Liyuan (Yu, 2010).

2.1.2 Latter-Day Music Education in China

Two important people namely Yechun Shan and Xiao Changhu went to Beijing and leaded the “Fuliancheng class” between 1904 and 1944. They have nurtured more than 600 people through the traditional Peking Opera art education. The result left a massive

impact and it also had the longest period of development in the history. In order to have a continuous development of Beijing Opera, Yechun Shan and Xiao Changhu trained a huge number of outstanding talents (Wang, 2006).

Besides them, there were many other such as Ouyang and Yuqian, who established the “Nantong Longgong School”; Chen Yan Qiu who established the “Chinese Dramas College”; Wang Bo Shen who established “Shandong Provincial Theatre” and so on. Each and every one of them dedicated themselves to explore new methods to teach drama while nurturing new talents (Yu, 2010).

In accordance to that, church school was the first ever music lesson to be offered in China, for instance, the Hong Kong Morrison School (1842-1849) (Sun, 2012), and Shanghai Xuhui Public School (1850) etc. After the Opium War, China had to reform many different fields like political, economic and cultural fields which directly promote the gradual establishment and development of the contemporary type of Chinese school’s music education. For example, Zhang Zhi Dong established “Sanjiang Normal School” in the year 1881. He hired Japanese instructors to conduct the music classes. On the other hand, Kang You-Wei, founded “Wan Mu Cottage” (Wang, 2006).

Furthermore, missionaries used a new method of teaching by incorporating music teaching as a part of their school curricula while hymn-singing and instruments will be in the extracurricular activities. All these laid the foundation for the development of music education in China. Despite that, Western music still failed to attract learners and

audiences in China even with the missionary's efforts (Gong, 2008).

However, in the 19th century, a group of Chinese reformers were on the rise. This group was led by the social and cultural elite who began to have interest in certain genres of Western music. Qing reformers such as Liang Qichao (1873-1929) was drawn towards mass singing like the Christian missionaries. He actively promoted the creation of singing lessons in school (Gong, 2008). According to Liang Qichao (1959), he stated that "to transform the nation's diathesis, the two utmost crucial spiritual education is poetry and music" (p.58).

The employment of Japanese teachers in China's new schools along with the translation of Japanese textbooks, further facilitated the spread of Western music in China during that time. In the first two decades of the 20th century, musical activism of Japanese trained Chinese pioneers and Japanese teachers from the provincial officials led the phenomenal popularity of Western-style group singing, *xue tang yue ge* (school song) (Gong, 2008).

School songs are an important symbol which marked the beginning of China's new musical and cultural development. It was through school songs and schools' music education that only the Western musical knowledge is able to be penetrated to the Chinese public and particularly students. Western musical knowledge included notation, teaching, introduction of sheet music, collective singing or choir, composition and etc. In accordance to the matter, the first batch of new music educators were formed in the

music history of modern China. For example, Shen Xingong has compiled the “School Singing Set” that was published in the year 1912 (Wang, 2006).

In February 1912, Cai Yuanpei (1868-1940) did his utmost to propose aesthetic education to be one of the five goals in the new music education system after being appointed as the Minister of Education for the provisional government in Nanjing. In response to Cai’s initiative, the Ministry later proclaimed that singing was to be a compulsory subject in both elementary and middle schools. Furthermore, the instruction of music theory and musical instruments were to be a part of the normal school curriculum. He emphasized a person’s morality was elevated through the music. Music was regarded as an integral part of aesthetic education for Cai and was determined in promoting music education in China’s modern education (Gong, 2008).

2.1.3 General School Music Education in China

In the early 1920s, a thorough investigation of Western music as a prerequisite was suggested by Chen Zhongzi before any discussion about a possible revival of Chinese music. Likewise, Zheng Xunyin and many other intellectuals also highlighted on the importance of learning from the West (Gong, 2008).

In the 1920s, music in schools was regarded as a favorable subject and the name for this subject in primary school was called “sing” while in high school it was called “songs”. Generally, there were two categories namely basic exercises and sing for the content of music lessons in school (Yu, 2010).

Following “the May 4th Procession of 1919”, music education turned into “aesthetic education” and escalated the development of China’s professional music education. As a result, the training of music teachers has become a social need. This need has prompted Xiao Youmei, Ke Zhenghe and many other professional musicians from the outset to prepare music textbooks for schools. It was seen as a very crucial task to deal with (Yu, 2010).

Liu Tianhua (1895-1932), a master of modern Chinese folk music and the originator of the erhu, attempted to reform Chinese musical instruments. In addition to transcribing traditional Chinese tunes into Western staff notation and incorporating the tunes into his own compositions by using Western compositional principles, he also applied the sophisticated fingering and bowing techniques of the violin to the erhu (Gong, 2008).

Composers such as Zhao Yuanren (1892-1982) and Huang Zi began composing music that incorporates Western music concepts. Zhao Yuanren composed art-song that is similar to Schubert’s Lieder by using piano accompaniment while Huang Zi joined Western forms with Chinese musical idioms to compose music for poems written in classical forms (Gong, 2008). Besides, Xian Xinghai (1905-1945), a Communist composer, rearranged folk melodies into Western forms like the cantata and symphony. At the same time, he used Chinese and Western musical instruments in his composition (Gong, 2008).

In the 1930s, general music education in primary and secondary schools began to develop intensely. The reason to this was due to the declaration of music lessons as a prerequisite course by the Ministry of Education officially. Positively, the declaration has greatly contributed to the development of general music education in China (Yu, 2010).

Music education also plays a very important role in the professional music college. A special committee was formed by the Ministry of Education to compile music textbooks for primary and secondary schools. Meanwhile, renowned Chinese music experts such as Huang Ziwei and many others were hired to be the authors of textbooks. Huang Ziwei led a group of professional musicians in 1933 - 1935 to compile the best quality of general music textbooks and titled it *Renaissance Primary Music Textbook* (Yu, 2010).

Besides that, there are others who compiled and published books on various topics such as basic music theory, teaching pedagogy and other theoretical aspects of music education. Naming a few, Chen Zhongzi's *Music Pedagogy* and Jia Xinfeng's *Music Education Theory*. Therefore, during the 1930s, music education has been a community-wide attention in the primary and middle schools of China (Yu, 2010).

After the 1930s, the development of China's general music education has been significantly better than the past. It is seriously important to construct the music department in some normal universities and to construct the music education in the

professional colleges. The Ministry of Education issued respectively from kindergarten to primary and secondary schools, music lessons must be officially classified as a required course (Zhang & Zhang, 2011).

The drastic development of professional music education began in the 1930s, such as the Shanghai National Music Institute. These professional music colleges had the complete teaching system in terms of college diploma, bachelor's degree. At this time, it notable that there was no age restriction in learning music as compared to the past. The establishment included music theory, music composition, vocal and instrumental performance, as well as Chinese traditional music. Many of these private colleges had limited professionals to teach music especially on piano, vocal and violin. However, these musical institutions gradually generated outstanding Chinese music educators (Wang, 2006).

In the big coastal city areas, music was a fad whereby education was widely influenced by the Western ideas. Music has turned into a profession for a few gifted. Some on the other hand taught music as a career in Chinese schools and colleges and most of them received their music training from the Christian mission institutions. Music was one of the most favorite subjects for Chinese students. They chose music as a form of entertainment and the best way to raise funds (Graves, 1946).

For the modern professional music education in China, students are trained in two different methods. One can be trained in music composition and performing arts for a

college diploma and undergraduate, or one can also be trained in the normal college through primary and high school. The early professional music education institutions are mostly affiliated with art schools or normal universities' faculty that run in a small scale. Most of these professional music education institutions were founded in the 1920s (Yu, 2010).

The first professional music institution of higher education in China is the National Music Academy (Shanghai, "National Music Institute") founded in November 27, 1927. This institution is the predecessor of Shanghai Conservatory of Music. With its establishment, it marks a new historical stage in China's professional music education (Yu, 2010).

Concurrently, other institutions such as music department of the Art Institute of the National Peking University, music department of the Hebei Provincial females Normal College, Private Shanghai Xinhua yizhuan music department began to establish in the 1920s. All these institutions' curriculums are influenced by the Shanghai National Music Institute. Shanghai National Music Institute for China to cultivate a large number of music talents with higher accomplishment, such as Xian xinghai, He lvding, Zhou xiaoyan etc (Yu, 2010).

Following the 1931 incident, large areas of the Northeast China began to be occupied and has a long history. Since nearly all the famous Chinese musicians left in the Northeast, a huge number of Japanese and Russian-born musicians have become the

backbone of all the music institutions. Based on the national education in Japan, music education in primary and secondary schools has always been emphasized, so in the “Northeast occupied zone” there was a relatively high number of music education in primary and secondary schools (Wang, 2006). Schools were formed such as Changchun “Higher Normal School” in music class was established in 1935 while Dalian’s “Dalian Music School” that was founded in 1926. Most of these schools were mainly taught by Japanese musicians.

Beginning from the year 1953, a great number of musicians from the Soviet and Eastern European countries were hired as a music teacher in the teaching institutions. Along with this, many more music institutions were established such as the Central Conservatory of Music, East China Branch of the Central Conservatory of Music, Northeast Music Institute (Shenyang), Southwest Music Institute (Chengdu), Northwest Music Institute (Xian), South Music Institute (Wuhan). While in Nanjing, Jinan, Changchun, Nanning, Kunming and other regions founded the regional, comprehensive art college and built music faculties (Yu, 2010).

2.1.4 Chinese modern music education

In China, modern schools are merely a century old and contemporary schooling can be really said to begin from the 1949 “liberation”. Germany, Japan and Russia are the major influences on the music education in China for over the past centuries and typically within the early years of Communism. Recently, there is a major shift towards Western or non-Russian influence (Reimer, 1989).

Merging old and new ideas, values and a melange of foreign influences, formal music instruction begin to emerge in China's kindergartens. Their daily music activities include singing, moving, dancing, clapping, playing classroom instruments that is usually conducted in individual classrooms but occasionally in larger groups in the courtyard or playground areas (Yu, 2010).

Music lessons are given one hour each week in schools in which students learn to sing and read music using a simplified form of notation. At the junior high level, a more compact and structured approach to music education will be taught. Throughout their three years, a total of two hours of general music will be attended by the students on a weekly basis. Students are expected to be able to read standard musical notation and at the same time continue singing. Out of 70 percent of the singing materials are Chinese while the remaining 30 percent are split among Western musical styles, which include standard classical repertoire, "popular" music and folk songs. Students will also need to devote one afternoon each week to the activities of "special interest groups besides attending general music classes" (Rogers, 1989).

Teachers who offer regular music lessons spend a huge amount of time teaching music notation. Both simple and regular staff notations are in use but staff notation will be used henceforth as command by the new government. There are nine conservatories of music which act as the pinnacle of China's music education system after the junior or senior middle school. Out of the nine, seven of the conservatories offer a music education major. Furthermore, 20 to 25 teacher colleges offer a music education major

as well. All of the country's professional musicians were educated in these conservatories (Reimer, 1989).

According to Roger (1989), there are a total of 24 required courses plus electives for music major education. These courses include:

1. Music Theory: eight classes, including advanced harmony and composition
2. Music History: two years of classes
3. Piano: two to four years of instructions; all teaching is done in private lessons (one hour weekly for non-piano majors and two hours weekly for piano majors)
4. Voice: two to four years of instruction; same arrangement as for piano
5. Chinese Music: classical and folk music, including Chinese instruments
6. Music education methods: one year
7. General education psychology
8. Other required courses: Chinese Language and Literature, English, History, History of the Communist Party (now renamed History of the Chinese Revolution). (Rogers, 1989)

Chinese Musicians' Association founded in 1979 is the major system for music education in school and is one of the China's most professional groups which is devoted to the enhancement of particular subject matter fields, artistic and non-artistic. Currently, Musicians' Associations can be found in every province and in many cities of China (Reimer, 1989).

Chinese children not only study both Chinese and Western instruments with any of a number of private teachers but also have the opportunities to perform at schools. Normally, they will take lessons at conservatories and a variety of community centers which offer after-school and weekend lessons and classes for children. The most notable center is the Children's Palaces that exist in many cities and provides after-school and weekend study opportunities in a broad spectrum of subjects. Private lessons are also being offered by the Children's Palaces that includes a wide array of both Western and Chinese instruments, choral and instrumental ensembles of various kinds (Reimer, 1989).

However, there was a struggle in Chinese music education on the balance of the traditional approach. In the traditional approach, song-singing and related notational and sight-singing skills are being emphasized to broaden the children's experiences. More creativity in methodology encourage musical independence rather than suppressing it (Reimer, 1989).

Musical texts do not constitute a curriculum in any real sense as they are just collections of Chinese and Western songs with a variety of fundamental exercises. Whatever listening that occurs includes both Chinese and Western music and the children will have to play both the Chinese and Western instruments (Reimer, 1989).

In the beginning of this century, the Western music education system emerged. Chinese scholars including musical scholars and music educators along with the

educational administrators have begun revising on the status quo of the cultural diversity of music in music education. At the same time, they were making a series of reform measures to encourage music education based on musical diversity. Even so, some scholars argued that this would lead to the path of systematization and professionalism, broadened vision, promoting exchange of musical cultures between China and the West, which would promote the development of Chinese music to a certain extent (Fan & Xie, 2007).

Comprehensive China Art Research Institute and Music Institute were established and continued to develop in the 1980s under the Ministry of Culture. On the other hand, music research institute was established gradually in the higher music institutions and the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions (Yu, 2010).

In the year 2002, the Ministry of Education decreed a curriculum reform that changed the examination system. Students will have to obtain a total of 144 credits in order to complete the program (116 from compulsory subjects including art subjects and from 28 electives) (De Nuffic, 2010).

Ever since the ancient times, education has always been a crucial course. While music education continues to develop, Chinese music education has integrated the characteristics of multiple countries and areas. At this moment, the music education includes education of western instruments such as piano and violin while Chinese traditional instruments includes Gu Zheng, Xun and so on. In the 21st century, students

will have to present comprehensive quality apart from the basic professional knowledge due to the rise in competition of talents. (Lin, 2014).

In China, it is widely believed that music and other fine arts simultaneously promote the development of culture. It also enhances a person's emotional richness while teaching discipline and morality. Thus, the government policy has begun to highlight the importance of fine arts education in schools. In China, more than 200,000 music teachers provide music education to more than 219,941,100 students of all level. In addition to that, there are also 388 colleges and universities that provides training for teachers (Fan & Xie, 2007).

Even though the music education in China has a few thousand years of history, it does not mean that our ancient sages can help our solving present-day problems. So, we must find out for ourselves the many "whys" and "how" in our life for us to represent that glorious past. What we need now more than anything else is the questioning mind and the experimental spirit. Therefore, in the process of developing music education, schools should focus on cultivating the younger generation's love of music and blow musical breezes to homes and society (Lee, 1946).

2.2 Aesthetic Education

"A work of art requires an intelligent spectator who must go beyond the pleasure of the eyes to express a judgment and to argue the reasons for what he sees." (Lucia, 1968)

There are two folds on the role of art in aesthetic education, particularly the performance approach and the traditional course in appreciation of music, art and literature. This is because the aesthetic education is not concerned with propagandizing any specific principles or ideologies (Zimmerman, 1982). Furthermore, the purpose of the educators or schooling in aesthetic education is neither to produce the artist nor the art appreciator but to train an imaginative perception (Swanger, 1983).

The history of aesthetic education is said to be as old as humankind. For as long as humans have lived, art itself has coexisted and has been passed down to every new generation. Having said that, it makes aesthetic education an important aspect that can not be ignored. Therefore, it is very important to have the aesthetic education of music to be a part of the social settings such as education in schools, as well as social and historical development (Reimer, 1989; Wang, 1991).

In the context of aesthetic music education, appreciation is not a skill of intellectual understanding or the blind emotional indulgence. As a matter of fact, it is the ability to perceive and apprehending aesthetic objects synoptically. In simple terms, it is an ability to distinguish works of art and other aesthetic objects (Osborne, 1976).

On the other hand, aesthetic sensitivity is another kind of ability in the context of aesthetic music education. It is believed that, a human being has a certain degrees of aesthetic sensitivity which varies from one to another. The sensitiveness for a person to the artistic content of the works of art can be nurtured, developed, refined and deepened.

In other words, this ability is teachable to some extent. When one possesses this ability, he or she is able to have aesthetic experiences. That means to say, one may be able to perceive the artistic content of art works and to reflect feeling to this content (Reimer, 1965).

There are aesthetic educators who present to teach art appreciation and the making of art with the aim of schooling (Swanger, 1983). Furthermore, arts educators such as supervisors, teachers of arts in the secondary schools and college faculty members are in common terms that measures should be taken to improve the curricula and pedagogy of teaching in music and other arts as well as the position of aesthetic education in the curriculum of the public schools (Broudy, 1976).

In order to do so, MacGregor (1986) states that there are two phases in the aesthetic education program. The first phase focuses on the development of guidelines for aesthetic education to provide a theoretical foundation for the curriculum. Meanwhile, the second phase focuses on the production of curriculum materials in the educational institutions.

In addition, there are two basic principles that should be applied to aesthetic education. Firstly, the aesthetic educators have to be acquainted with the core values of music. As for the second principle, music educators emphasize on portraying the art of music to children authentically and comprehensively. From time to time, music educators have to constantly engage themselves in self-correction, changing and

improving with the changes of aesthetic education (Reimer, 1989).

Aesthetic values are the expressions of a person when they claimed that something is beautiful, ugly or perceptually interesting. The aesthetic values become evident through a person's purchase, protect or honor on an item or art work. However, it does not coincide with other moral or ethical values. Understanding ourselves and the world we live in through arts is an essential component in general education. It is necessary to include the development of moral and ethical values as well as cultivating the skill of aesthetic literacy in the general education (Holden, 1978).

By cultivating the college students' aesthetic ability, it would expand their musical aesthetic vision. As a result, college students would be able to heighten their music auditory perception, imagination, emotional feelings, insight and skills as well as the ability to understand music. Coherently, this capability will help to enhance the college students to understand and identify the different types of music (Geng, 2010).

Although public schools establish and support aesthetic education, most of the parents are not in the same track. They prefer their children to savor the good things in life and enjoy arts. This is due to the matter that parents have invested millions on the musical instruments, dancing lessons and many other form of art instructions for their children after school. When that happens, the aesthetic education is unable to develop to its full extent and schools would not be leading the young on the right road (Broudy, 1976).

Now, aesthetic experience is not only limited to the grounds of museums or concert halls but in fact it is also apparent in our daily lives. For instance, the quality of voice, clothing, demeanor and our physical surroundings for cues to a wide range of theoretical and practical judgements are reflections of our daily life that can also be regarded as aesthetic experiences (Broudy, 1976).

There are many different types of music experience resulting to different kinds of aesthetic reactions. Some music evokes only sensual reactions whereas other music stimulates significant emotional-intellectual experiences. Certain music may be understood informally while other music requires scholastic effort before its value can be identified. Music educators play a vital role in guiding students to experience music in life. We must always bear in mind that aesthetic need (the desire for beauty) is a high-order need (Roach, 1973).

Despite the fact that aesthetic education is not an educational basic as compared to the conventional art courses, it can be “sold” to the public with the development of “literacy” (Broudy 1976). The reason for that is because the avant-garde works of art (serious art) is very esoteric. Art in this state is highly experimental in form, content or both and alienates not only the general public but often the public which makes it critical scenario. Nevertheless, educators must strongly discourage on the use of arts or aesthetic education to impose ideologies and values as aesthetic values are only a type of human value (Zimmerman, 1982).

Clearly, arts are shaped by our sensibilities, values and social norms. It affects our feelings and thereby affecting our actions as well. So, if the arts are related to cultural development and the ethnic decline is stemming from the vulgarization of art, then, it is reasonable to promote the arts in education, especially those art experiences that would affect the increasing movement towards the stereotype (Holden, 1978).

Laymen who devote themselves to the arts are art lovers, supporters of musical organizations, members of arts councils and art patrons. These people devote not only time but energy and money to the arts. In other words, the initial step to learning arts is to have appreciation courses (Broudy, 1976).

Both the artists and critics believe that serious art is worthy to discuss. Hence, schooling is needed for performance in both serious and popular art whilst the serious art learning focuses on the areas of perception and judgment. The value of enjoyment is sufficient validator of popular art but not in serious art. This may be due to the fact that popular art is easy to enjoy and is widely accepted. Since its perception, conception and imaginative expectations fits the audiences' sensation. On that basis, popular art does not require any connoisseurship or special training for its appreciation. Comparatively, the serious art is on a different course. Artists in serious art try to create an artistic value and give aesthetic satisfaction to their audiences (Zimmerman, 1982). The application on the standards of the artist won't be necessary in trying to help the students perceive and judge the manner of the artist if, the goal of aesthetic education can improve the aesthetic perception and judgements.

Serious arts are being patronized more generously by both artists and critics like the general public (Broudy, 1976). Conversely, composers were composing to impress other composers rather than for public consumption (Youngberg, 1962).

In order to improve the aesthetic perceptivity, three broad methods that can be used. The first method refers to the development of concepts and factual knowledge, such as what art is supposedly to do and not to do. The second method is to use analytical skills to all the activities that deal directly with the aesthetic content of a particular work or broad style. Finally, it is the method of performing all kinds of activities that involves the actual making of art, ranging from classroom singing, symphony orchestra, dramatic production, etc (Reimer, 1965).

Finally, aesthetic education does not delimit itself to the liking or disliking of subjectivism but far beyond to the development of the skill of producing, conceptualizing, evaluating and valuing. Perhaps a new definition of aesthetics is needed at this moment and obviously, aesthetic reactions are closely linked to human emotions and intellectuals which makes it worthy of research by educators, since aesthetics have a history of being somehow or rather in an exclusive realm of philosophical inquiry and sometimes psychological experimentation (Roach, 1973).

As a conclusion, the physical and perceptual or aesthetic object is a work of art. Sometimes, the differences between an aesthetic object and a work of art is incomparable as it may not always be obvious. Even so, there are still differences which

makes a clear-cut between the both (Smith, 1968). A theory of aesthetic experience and the aesthetic object is therefore necessary in the aesthetic education, which is sadly taken by few. Yet, aesthetic should be added into the music education and is not similar to creating either aesthetic or educational theory (Broudy, 1976).

2.3 Contemporary music

2.3.1 Situation of the contemporary music

Contemporary music in China has diverse understandings that includes contemporary music, music of the 20th and 21st centuries, modernist music, music of our time, present-day music, new music, newest music, musical modernism. All these and many more have their current Chinese equivalents. Even augmented by more inclusive concepts such as Klangkunst („sound art“), audio-visual art, performance art, audio art, radiophonic music, ars acustica and music in the web. Since “Contemporary music” produced, it has been mixed in that the Chinese theorists have always had two different attitudes, praise or blame (Zhang, 2013).

Based on various dictionaries and encyclopedias, contemporary music can be defined in seven ways at the very least (Xu, 2010). The definitions are as below:

1. Referring to all Western professional music works from the time after impressionism or specifically between the period of late 19th century and early 20th century, until today.
2. It is synonymous to 20th century music (mainly referring to the arts music); and is also similar to avant-garde music; in its narrow sense.

3. It is the generic term for the 20th century music which corresponds to the ancient and classic music with regards to the time and nature of the music.
4. It is also mentioned as modern music, new music, avant-garde music, 20th century music, today's music, which are the idioms used for musical comments.
5. It is also known as the school of modern music that is the generic term of all genres of music from Europe during the late 19th and early 20th century.
6. It is also a generic term of Western music that embodies modernity since the late 20th century.
7. A genre of music in the Western modern music since the late 19th century up to the early 20th century.

According to Wang Shenshen in “Modernist Music in China’s Destiny”, Chinese public needs music to emanate patriotism that is considered exciting. In addition, it is very difficult for contemporary music to securely set foot in China due to the different musical traditions and musical aesthetic between the West and Chinese. Furthermore, it is believed that due to the commodity economy that has infiltrate into all areas of society, traditional values are gradually dismantled. Moreover, there is a gradual increase in the various sectors of society resulting to better quality of living standards, spiritual pursuit and inner emptiness. With that, that kind of music began to be a necessity to Chinese people (Wang, 1995).

Contemporary music counters to almost everything that have been taught to most of us. Contemporary music composition is no longer about beautiful melody, traditional cadence formula and traditional forms. Instead, the ordering of pitch, rhythm, dynamics, registration and timbre are now determinants of progression and the end product of a piece of music. We can no longer depend on a tune and its repetition for guidance. Teachers must at least be able to provide guidelines since the technical aspects are beyond the comprehension of the norm (Chidester, 1965).

Contemporary music is being neglected in both primary and secondary music education. The musical choices of general public are often being affected by conventional repertoire. "When being asked for the definition of classical music, people will normally answer Bach, Beethoven and Brahms, sometimes Stravinsky and Bartok but never mention Stockhausen or Berio (Christiansen & Hart, 1985).

In early 20th century, Chinese musician studied in Europe and United States learned and inspired by Western music. They tried to reconstructed Chinese music to create China's new music. In early 1980s, Western composers who continuously visited China brought in a lot of Western modernist and avant-garde music scores, sound recordings and write on compositional theory. As a result, music students in China became more intuitive, comprehensive and have in-depth understanding to the European and American music development. Based on recent report, Tan Dun, Ye Xiaogang, Zhou Long, Chen Yi are all working on varying degrees of avant-garde and experimental music (Zhang, 2013).

Sounds from the past will not satisfy contemporary musicians as they are looking for new sounds and new musical concepts, such as the sound of life as a creative material, the sound of noisy streets or the sound of car horns, etc. It can also be used to create a microtonal music, noise music and other special forms of music. They also learn from Asian countries' music theory and style in order to seek a new sound (Lin, 2010).

During the 20th century, the classical music system is being defied by the Western contemporary music which includes the change in rhythm, traditional notation, pitch, singing and playing technique. In the 20th century music, any form of sound is accepted and used, as the composers are trying to bring the music to a whole new level (Chao, 2007).

The artists in the 20th century are different from other era's modernist artists. They broke the tradition, and tried various ways of innovation and breakthroughs. After the 1950s, many composers developed some methods to the extreme; on other hand, they were more actively engaged in a variety of new musical experiments, and strived to avoid what had been used (Xie, 2012). They rebel awareness of contemporary music, which challenge the creation's uniqueness and unity, provides a new perspective. Contemporary music reflects the composers' attempt and the use of new music elements, thus it promotes the continuous development of the art of music (Geng, 2010).

2.3.2 Controversy of contemporary music in China

Chinese contemporary musicologist and music critic Ju Qihong mentioned that contemporary music is a music in trend. With its radical musical ideas, rebellious attitude and incomprehensible sound is rising in China. However, at the beginning, contemporary music was hardly accepted (Lin, 2010).

Tan Dun would be the first person to be mentioned in the discussion of Chinese contemporary music. He is a master in composition and has the ability to connect history with future, original with avant-garde, sound with silence, urban with rural and many other multi-elements altogether comprehensively. His music created a massive impact in the Chinese music scene and Chinese audience. Even so, the music industry's experts and academics have contradicting views about Tan Dun's music (Zhang, 2013).

Chinese conductor Bian Zushan said that Tan Dun's various techniques of exploration and experimentation are like "The Emperor's New Clothes", and his work is dismissive (Lin, 2010). Cai Zhongde also stated that the central conservatory of Tan Dun's music is the complex technicalities used in his works. Tan Dun's works are full of odd sound, strange noises and is unable to be enjoyed by the audience. Furthermore, the absurd secretive atmosphere, filled with ghostly air and far from reality made audiences dazed in confusion and bewildering (Cai, 1994). Xin Yusi on the other hand claims that Tan Dun's music and his representative's composers do duplicity. Moreover, after Huang Xiaohu had listened to Tan Dun's music, he came up with a few doubts: What is the music? Is nature, human life and all sounds considered as music? Is a silent

performance music? What is the main purpose of music anyway? Is it seeking external sensory stimuli, focusing on visual effects or focusing on hearing to impress the mind and cultivate character (Li, 1944).

Yet, there is another view to this, Tang Jianping thinks that creation is the composer's instincts. The music in the past is history and composers these days need to create music that belongs to this era. Therefore, composers who have the spirit of exploration will always be in the frontlines of musical development. Due to the inability to go beyond the old era, the collision concept was being generated. Thus, Tan Dun's creative spirit have gone beyond the meaning of his work itself (Tang, 1944). Wang Anguo also commented on Tan Dun's music works and perceived that the audio material combinations and performances form and so on is a reflection of the composer's distinct personality. In addition, the personality reflects on the composer's unique insights and aesthetic pursuit to the art (Zhang, 2013).

A musical composition successful when the music has the ability to appeal and attract audiences to listen, according to composer Luo ZhongRong. In terms of the understanding of music, there are no clear lines. Therefore, Tan Dun's music is able to attract audience so it wouldn't be right to say that the audience do not understand it (Li, 1944).

The silence piece *4'33* was written by an American contemporary musician named John Cage. When the pianist came to play the *4'33*, just sit in front of the piano 4

minutes 33 seconds, without any movement until the curtain call. This piece is not considered as music to certain people. And the reason to that is due to the fundamentals of the music which is the inexistence of “sounds”. Elaborating on this, Professor Zhou Haihong from the Central Conservatory of Music explains that it is unnecessary to create music if emotional experience is not being used in sounds as an expression. Similarly, he was relating this to the piece of “4’33”. A different perception was also deduced by composer Zhu Jianer. He believes that John Cage wanted to use the piece “4’33” to describe his artistic concept whereby everything in life can be regarded as the natural sound of music. As a matter of fact, the piece “4’33” is not entirely silent. In the concert hall, there will be occasional unpredictable sounds from the audience. There are expectations, imaginations, surprises and doubts being a part of this music (Chao, 2007).

Lastly, there are many creative works during this period but the most ironic out of all is the symphony “Di Ping Xian” composed in the year 1985. Beijing’s music industry was held by the reins of the traditional guardians at this time. New ideas or thoughts of the young people have all been strangled in the cradle or simply said neglected. At the same time, the younger generations do not know how to use the “traditional” approach to compose music. Hence, Ye Xiaogang decided to compose a Mahler style of romantic music “Di Ping Xian” to retaliate. This composition is being performed in other countries by Chinese conductor. 10 years later, people still discuss about this piece whenever Ye Xiaogang held its performances (Zhang, 2013).

Summary

In short, evolution of music education in China shows continuous effort of local in promoting music, from ancient Chinese music that were only available to noble families to general music education that was included in education system. Westernization and introduction of aesthetic education had changed the society's perception towards contemporary music, causing an evolution towards local music scene. Political, economic and cultural reasons too influence how music education was and in current society.

University of Malaya

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Quantitative methodology was employed in this research. Quantitative research is defined as social research that makes use of empirical methods and empirical statements (Cohen, 1980). He further states that empirical statement is defined as a descriptive statement about what “is” the case in the “real world” rather than what “ought” to be the case. Quantitative research could also be defined as “explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods” (Creswell, 1994). Data of quantitative research are collected through polls, questionnaires and surveys, or by manipulating pre-existing statistical data using computational techniques (Babbie, 2007). Quantitative research emphasize on collecting numerical data and generalizing it across groups of people or to explain a specific phenomenon (Babbie, 2007).

3.1 The sample

Sampling is the process of selecting observations and there are two types of sampling method: probability sampling and nonprobability sampling (Babbie, 2007). Probability sampling is the general term for selected samples in accord with probability theory. “Specific types of probability sampling include EPSEM, PPS, simple random sampling, and systematic sampling” (Babbie, 2007, p.187). There are four types of nonprobability sampling: reliance on available subjects, purposive or judgmental sampling, snowball sampling, and quota sampling. Quota sampling was used in this research so that the participants will have same distribution of characteristics assumed

to exist in the population being studied (Babbie, 2007).

One hundred undergraduate and postgraduate music students who are currently studying in Guangxi Arts University were selected. Demographic and personal information related to the research were obtained. Information includes age, gender, majoring subject and years of music learning experience. Respondents were asked to fill out a questionnaire. However, due to the fact that contemporary music courses are elective courses for both undergraduate and graduate students, the analysis will not make a distinction between the undergraduate and graduate students.

3.2 Research design

This study ought to explore the university students' attitudes towards contemporary music in China. Quantitative method is employed in order to achieve the research purpose. Data received from participants were tabulated and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) software. The survey was conducted at the Guangxi Arts University in China, and the sample consisted of students from the department of music.

3.3 Instrumentation

A survey of Attitudes Towards Contemporary Music (ATCM) was developed specifically for this study. ATCM was developed through Wehr-Flowers' (2006) questionnaire on attitude of students in learning jazz improvisation. Wehr-Flowers instrumentation uses the Fennema-Sherman Mathematics Attitude Scales (1976) which

was modified for jazz improvisation based on a selective model used and validated by Sarubbi (2003). Questionnaire items were adapted from several instruments and a five options Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” was constructed for each item to find out the attitudes of participants towards contemporary music. There were twenty-seven items in the questionnaire, divided into three sections:

1. General information of participants,
2. Attitudes towards contemporary music
3. Sources of contemporary music information

For general information, participants were required to fill in details on age, gender, course they majored in and years of music learning experience. Section two examines participants’ attitudes towards contemporary music through questions such as “I enjoy contemporary music” and “I enjoy reading articles about contemporary music topics”. In section three, participants were asked on how they obtain information regarding contemporary music.

3.4 Pilot Study

To ensure the reliability and validity of the survey, a pilot study has been done through email before the formal investigation. There were twenty students participating in the pilot study. These twenty participants include music students and music teachers from different cities in China. The pilot study successfully helped the researcher to test the instruments used in this study. It led to important improvements and indicated the

need for some modifications in the early version of this questionnaire. For example, some respondents requested more explanations for this questionnaire and this was done in the final version.

3.5 Reliability for Attitudes Towards Contemporary Music (ATCM)

To assess the internal consistency for the music students' answers on this instrument, Cronbach's Alpha was computed with a score of .729 for the 27 items scale. This result shows that the students in this study answered the questions in a consistent manner.

3.6 Data collection procedure

Before the data collection, the researcher gets permission from a professor who is in charge of the Composition Department of the Guangxi Arts University. After getting the permission of conducting this survey in this university, the researcher gave all the participants a consent form for asking their willingness to participate in this study. The researcher distributed the questionnaires to participants in the classroom and it takes approximately 15-20 minutes to complete the questionnaires.

3.7 Data Analysis

For Research Question One (What are the differences between male and female students' attitudes towards contemporary music?), the T-test was applied to identify significant difference between female attitudes and male attitudes towards contemporary music.

For Research Question Two (What are the attitudes among university music students with different years of music learning experiences towards contemporary music?), a one-way ANOVA was used to compare the variation among or between groups.

For Research Question Three (What are the differences of attitudes towards contemporary music between the students who major in music theory and music performance?), the T-test was applied to identify significant difference between participants who are majoring in two different music subjects.

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CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings resulting from data analysis. Data analysis consists of descriptive statistic on background of participants such as age, gender, years of music learning experience and major course of study. Statistic on students' approach in getting information for contemporary music through eleven items survey, and students' attitudes towards contemporary music through sixteen items survey were tabulated and discussed. This chapter concludes with a summary of the findings.

Data collected were analyzed and used to answer the three research questions:

(1) What are the differences between male and female students' attitudes towards contemporary music?

(2) What are the attitudes among university music students with different years of music learning experiences towards contemporary music?

(3) What are the differences of attitudes towards contemporary music between the students who major in music theory and music performance?

Instruments used in this study were adapted from several questionnaires. A pilot study was conducted from February to April 2016 in order to test the reliability of the questionnaire "Attitudes Towards Contemporary Music" (ATCM) used in this study. Demographic data sheets of the survey and questionnaire were distributed to the music student of Guangxi Arts University. Among the 118 returned questionnaires, only 100

questionnaires are complete and valid for analysis of students' attitudes towards contemporary music.

Reliability Statistic

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized items	N of items
.729	.723	27

Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency: how closely related a set of items as a group (UCLA, 2016). It is used to assess the reliability of the instruments. In the 27 items survey, Cronbach's alpha was computed with a score of .729. This shows that the participants in this study answered the questions in a consistent manner.

Table I shows the frequency distributions of demographic variables for 100 students involving in the survey.

Table I

Background of Participants (N=100)

	N	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	32	32
Female	68	68
Total	100	100

Table I (continued)

	N	Percentage (%)
Age group		
18-21	1	1
22-25	52	52
Over 26	47	47
Total	100	100
Years of music learning experience		
3 years or below	15	15
4-9 years	63	63
Over 10 years	22	22
Total	100	100
Major course of study		
Music theory studies	78	78
Music performance	22	22
Total	100	100

Figure I

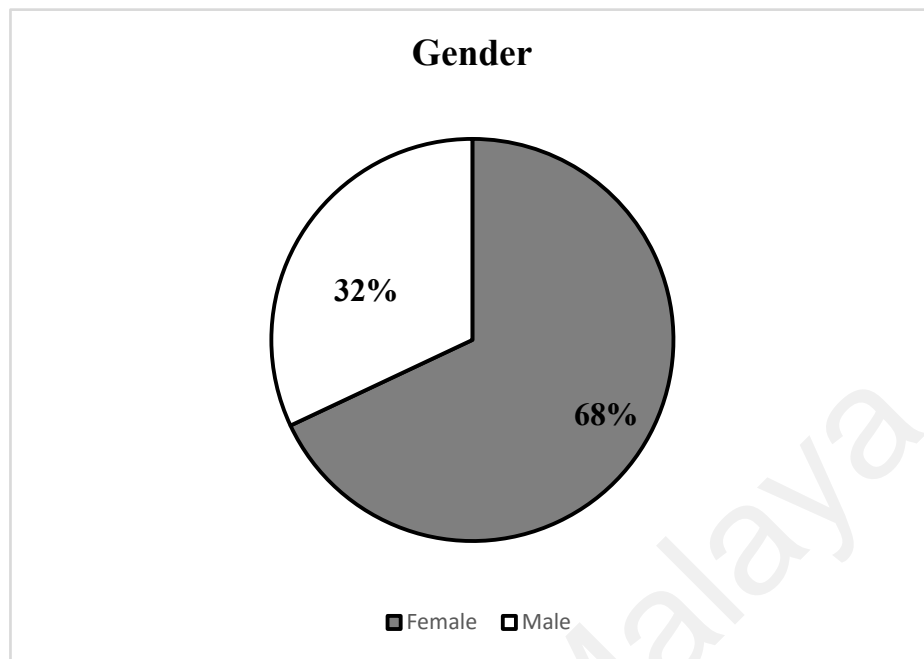


Figure I shows that female participants are more than male participants. Female makes up 68% (n=68) of the total participant (n=100) while male makes up 32% (n=32) in the sample.

Figure II

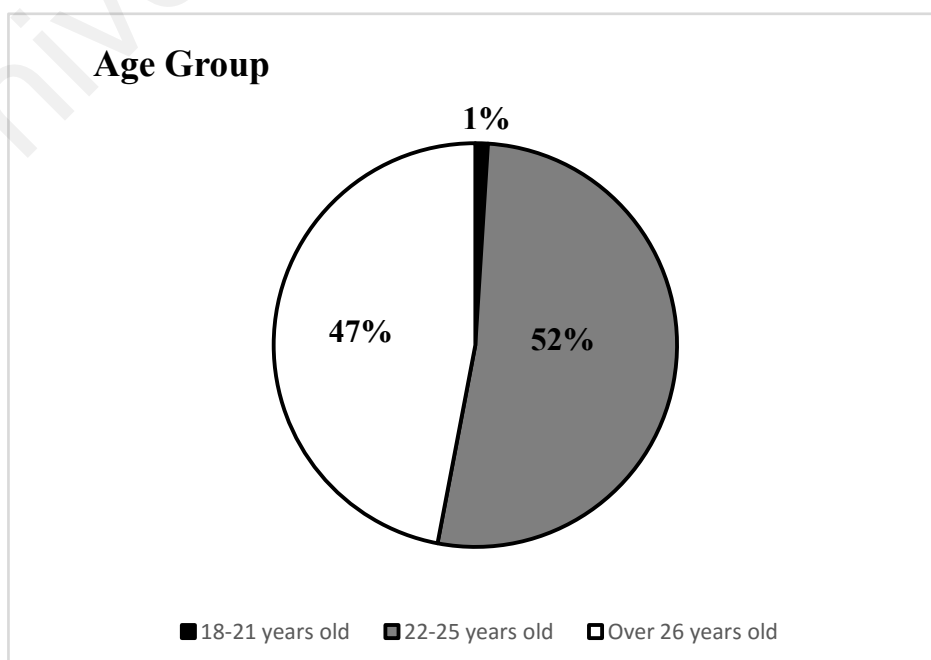


Figure II shows that only 1% of the students are between 18 and 21 years old.

52% of the students in the sample are between 22 and 25 years old.

47% of the students in the sample are over 26 years old.

As can be seen from Figure II, the majority of participants were over 22 years old.

Figure III

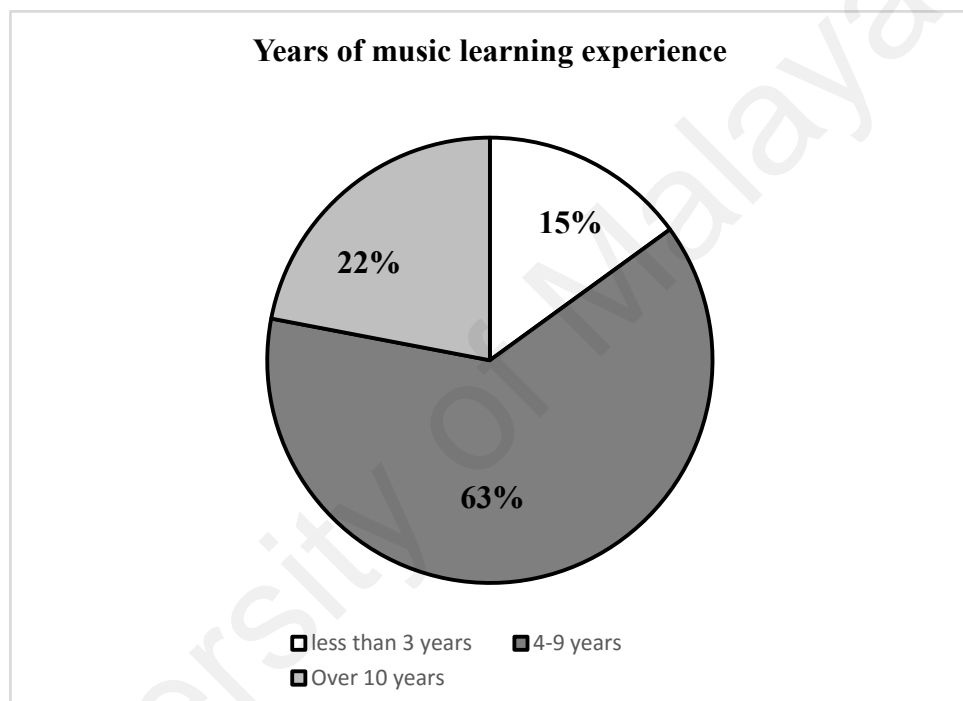


Figure III shows that the percentage of years of music learning experience for the participants.

15% of the participants (n=15) have less than three years of music learning experience.

63% of the participants (n=63) have four to nine years of music learning experience.

22% of the participants (n=63) have over 10 years of music learning experience.

As can be seen from Figure III, the majority of participants has more than four years of music leaning experience.

Figure IV

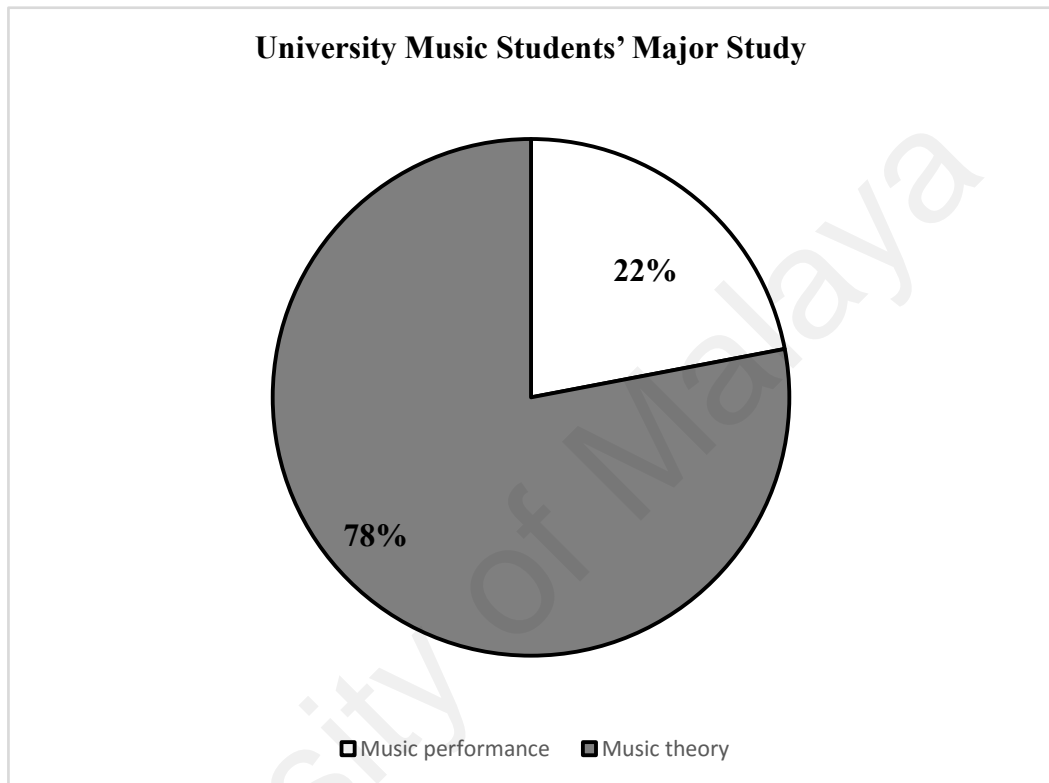


Figure IV shows that music theory majored participants are more than music performance majored participants.

78% of the participants (n=78) are music theory majored, includes music composition, choral conducting, aural skill, musicology, and music education.

22% of the participants (n=22) are music performance majored, includes vocal performance and instrumental performance.

Table II shows the way students get information about contemporary music. The data of the 100 students' surveys were analyzed.

Table II

Students' Approaches in Getting Information about Contemporary Music

Item No.	Item Description	Mean
PIII01	Information about contemporary music received from newspapers or magazines	2.26
PIII02	Information about contemporary music received from college professors	3.03
PIII03	Information about contemporary music received from textbooks	3.06
PIII04	Information about contemporary music received from friends or acquaintances	2.80
PIII05	Information about contemporary music received from network radio or public television	3.44
PIII06	Information about contemporary music received from scholarly, peer-reviewed journals	2.67
PIII07	Information about contemporary music received from concerts or program notes	3.50
PIII08	Information about contemporary music received from trade publications (specialist publications)	2.45

Table II (continued)

Item No.	Item Description	Mean
PIII09	Information about contemporary music received from research publications	2.33
PIII10	Information about contemporary music received from community or peer-group communications	2.37
PIII11	Information about contemporary music received from networking sites	3.23

Note: PIII represent the third section of the questionnaire that asked on students' approach in getting information regarding contemporary music.

Table II shows the result for students' approaches in getting information about contemporary music. There are eleven items present in this section, from PIII 01 to PIII 11. These items include getting information from secondary sources, academic institution, performance and media, or from peers.

From Table II, the means ranging from 2.26 to 2.80 include items of information about contemporary music received from newspapers or magazine, friends or acquaintances, scholarly and peer-reviewed journals, trade publications (specialist publications), research publications and community or peer-group communications.

The means ranging from 3.03 to 3.50 include items of information about contemporary music received from the college professors, textbooks, network radio or public television, networking sites, and concerts or program notes.

The items with three highest mean scores are information about contemporary music received from networking sites (mean=3.23), network radio or public television (mean=3.44) and concerts or program notes (mean=3.50). Report shows that television satellite coverage in China had a growth of 10.1% in year 2015 if compared to year 2014 (Sohu, Nov 2015). Development of communicating technology in China provides easy access to media and internets. Residents are able to get information from different networking sites easily.

Table III shows the result of students' attitudes towards contemporary music.

Table III
Attitudes Towards Contemporary Music

Item No.	Item Description	Mean
PII01	I enjoy reading articles about contemporary music topics	3.49
PII02	I hate contemporary music	2.18
PII03	Contemporary music is easy for me to understand	2.95
PII04	Contemporary music is boring	2.25
PII05	I enjoy contemporary music	3.27

Table III (continued)

Item No.	Item Description	Mean
PII06	Studying contemporary music is a waste of time	2.02
PII07	I would like to go to the concert of contemporary music	3.71
PII08	Contemporary music is a very difficult topic for me	2.61
PII09	Contemporary music is one of my favorite topics	3.10
PII10	I participated in the contemporary music creation or performance	2.85
PII11	The music colleges should set up contemporary music curriculum	4.17
PII12	The music colleges should take the contemporary music as compulsory course	3.63
PII13	Contemporary music should not be included in a university curriculum	2.14
PII14	Contemporary music is a very broad category, I like contemporary music of a popular nature	3.35
PII15	Contemporary music is a very broad category, I like contemporary art music.	3.48
PII16	I like some, and dislike some	3.60

Note: PII represent second section of the questionnaire that asked on students' attitudes towards contemporary music.

Figure V

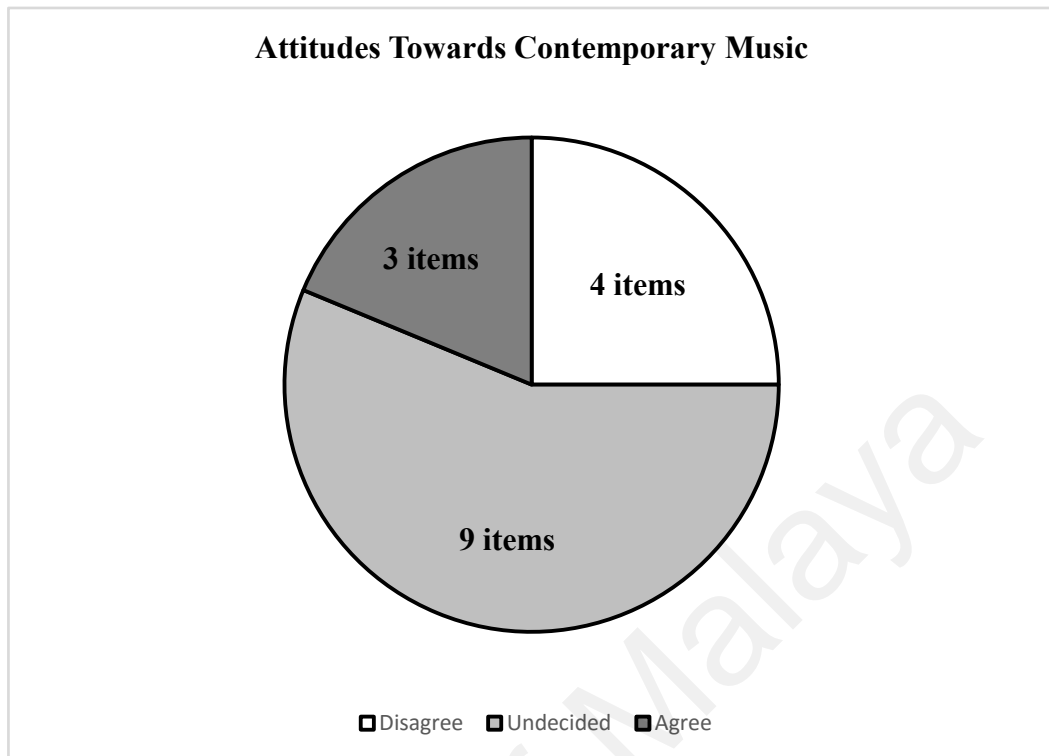


Figure V shows a division of items according to the mean scores collected from participants.

Mean score ranging from 2.02 to 2.25 shows that participants do not agree with the items;

Mean score ranging from 2.61 to 3.60 shows that answer provided by participants are neutral;

Mean score ranging 3.63 to 4.17 shows that participants agree with the items.

Four items in the survey received lower mean scores while three items in the survey received higher mean scores. Nine items in the survey received mid mean scores.

The items with a mean ranging from 2.02 to 2.25 are “I hate contemporary music”; “Contemporary music is boring”; “Studying contemporary music is a waste of time”;

and “Contemporary music should not be included in a university curriculum”. Low mean range on negative questions reveals that participant’s attitudes towards contemporary music are positive.

The items with mean ranging from 3.63 to 4.17 are “I would like to go to the concert of contemporary music”; “The music colleges should take the contemporary music as compulsory course”; and “The music colleges should set up contemporary music curriculum”. High mean range shows that participants are willing to know more about contemporary music.

The items with a mean ranging from 2.61 to 3.60 are “I enjoy reading articles about contemporary music topics”; “Contemporary music is easy for me to understand”; “I enjoy contemporary music”; “Contemporary music is a very difficult topic for me”. “Contemporary music is one of my favorite topics”; “I participated in the contemporary music creation or performance”; “I like some, and dislike some”; and “Contemporary music is a very broad category, I like contemporary music of a popular nature”; “Contemporary music is a very broad category, I like contemporary art music”.

The item with the highest mean of 4.17 in the list is “The music colleges should set up contemporary music curriculum”. This shows that most of the participants are eager to study contemporary music courses in the university, and are willing to learn contemporary music. On the other hand, the item that received lowest mean of 2.02 in the list is “Studying contemporary music is a waste of time”.

Research Question One

What are the differences between male and female students' attitudes toward contemporary music?

Table IV

Means Scores and T-test Data for Comparison between Male and Female on Attitudes towards Contemporary Music(ATCM)

Source of Variance	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value
Gender					
Male	32	3.12	1.06	3.41	0.28
Female	68	3.02	0.89		

*Significant at 0.05

By comparing the mean scores of male participants to the mean scores of the female participants, it shows that the male participants achieve higher scores than female participants. However, the p-value as shown in the T-test analysis indicates that there was no significant difference between mean scores of both groups of students.

Research Question Two

What are the attitudes among university music students with different years of music learning experiences towards contemporary music?

Table V

One-way Analysis of Variance for Attitudes Towards Contemporary Music (ATCM)

by Years of Music Learning Experience

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.352	1	1.352	4.097	.046
Within Groups	30.361	92	.330		
Total	31.713	93			

*Significant at 0.05

There were a total of 100 participants in the study. A one-way factorial ANOVA was used to analyze the results for this research questions.

A one-way analysis of variance was computed in order to compare the mean levels of years of music learning experience in ATCM scores. Results of the ANOVA are presented in table V and reveals that a significant difference exists in the scores.

Table VI

Differences in Attitude by Years of Music Learning Experience

(I) Years studied music at University	(J) Years studied music at University	(I-J) Mean Different	Std. Error	Sig.
3 years or below	4-9 years	-.283*	.130	.032
3 years or below	Over 10 years	-.464*	.151	.003
4-9 years	Over 10 years	-.181*	.112	.109

*It indicates statistically significant differences between years of music learning

experience at 0.05.

The results of the three groups are presented in Table VI.

1. There are significances between participants with three years or below music learning experience and participants with four to nine years music learning experience.

2. There are significances between participants with three years or below music learning experience and participants with over 10 years music learning experience.

3. There is no significant difference between participants with four to nine years music learning experience and participants with over 10 years music learning experience.

Research Question Three

What are the differences of attitudes towards contemporary music between the students who major in music theory and music performance?

Table VII

Means and T-test Data for Comparison between Music theory students and Music performance students on Attitudes towards Contemporary Music

Scores

Source of Variances	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value
Major course of study					
Music theory	78	3.05	0.93	1.86	0.38
Music performance	22	3.06	1.01		

*Significant at 0.05

By comparing the mean scores of the music theory students to the mean scores of the music performance students, it shows that the music performance students achieve higher scores than music theory students. However, the p-value as shown in the T-test analysis indicates that there was no significant difference between mean scores of both groups of students.

Summary of the findings

This chapter described the data collected, outlined the statistical analyses used to test the proposed research questions, and discussed the research questions outcomes.

Students' Approaches in Getting Information about Contemporary Music

The highest mean scores (3.50) in the list is "Information about contemporary music received from concerts or program notes". The lowest mean scores (2.26) in the list is "Information about contemporary music received from newspapers or magazines".

Attitudes Towards Contemporary Music (ATCM)

Item “The music colleges should set up contemporary music curriculum” was ranked the highest with the mean score of 4.71 among all the attitudes towards contemporary music. While “studying contemporary music is a waste of time” does not give much of a significant value with the mean score of 2.26 to the music students.

Research Question One

What are the differences between male and female students' attitudes toward contemporary music?

There are no significant differences in students' attitudes score towards contemporary music with the variable of gender.

Research Question Two

What are the attitudes among university music students with different years of music learning experiences toward contemporary music?

There are 15 students with three years or below of music learning experience, 63 students with four to nine years of music learning experience, and 22 students have over ten years of music learning experience.

There are significant differences in music students' attitudes scores with variable years of music learning experience. The music students who had three years of music learning experience had attitude significantly higher than the ones who had four to nine years of music learning experience, as well as those who had ten years and above of

music learning experience.

Research Question Three

What are the differences of attitudes toward contemporary music between the students who major in music theory and music performance?

There are 78 music theory students with mean scores of 3.05, and 22 music performance students with mean scores of 3.06. There is no significant difference in music students' attitudes scores with the variable of music studies in university.

University of Malaya

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was carried out to investigate the attitudes of Guangxi Arts University's students towards contemporary music in Nanning, China. Research was conducted in April 2016 and data was collected through an adapted questionnaire. A number of 118 questionnaires were distributed but there were only 85% of return ($n=100$).

The background of the participants in this study are as follows:

Female participants comprise 68% ($n=68$) of the total respondent ($n=100$) while male participants comprise 32% ($n=32$). 52% ($n=52$) of the participants aged between 22 and 25 while 47% ($n=47$) aged more than 26. Only 1% ($n=1$) aged 18. Out of 100 participants, 78% ($n=78$) were music theory major and 63% ($n=63$) have 4 to 9 years of music learning experience in university.

Based on the results stated in Table II, it shows that most of the students received information regarding contemporary music through concerts or program notes, with a mean score of 3.50.

As stated in Table III, it shows that the music colleges should set up contemporary music curriculum, with a mean score of 4.17.

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the differences between male and female students' attitudes towards contemporary music?
2. What are the attitudes among university music students with different years of music learning experiences towards contemporary music?
3. What are the differences of attitudes towards contemporary music between the students who major in music theory and music performance?

For research question one, although the mean scores for male participants ($M=3.12$; $SD=1.06$) are higher than female participants ($M=3.02$; $SD=0.89$), the p-value in T-test analysis shows that there was no significant difference between the mean scores of both groups. The attitudes of male and female participants towards contemporary music are almost alike. Studies relating to male and female attitudes in jazz and popular music often shows distinguish differences. Research done by Wehr-Flowers (2006) on jazz improvisation learning involved 83 male and 54 female participants where 50 of them were middle school or junior high school students; 43 were high school students; and 44 were in college or are adult. The result of this research showed distinctive differences of attitudes in gender: female participants are significantly less confident if compared to male participants towards jazz and popular music.

For research question two, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was computed in order to compare the mean levels of years in music learning experience in Attitudes Towards Contemporary Music (ATCM) scores. Results reveal significant differences in attitudes of participants relating to the year of music learning experience.

Based on the results indicated in Table VI, it shows the comparison between three groups of participants:

First group compares the participants with three years of music learning experience or below and participants with four to nine years of music learning experience. The difference in attitudes of participants towards contemporary music is significant, with a p-value of .032.

Second group compares the participants with three years of music learning experience or below and participants with above 10 years of music learning experience. The difference in attitudes of participants towards contemporary music is significant at the p-value of .003.

Third group compares the participants with four to nine years of music learning experience and participants with above 10 years of music learning experience. The attitudes of participants towards contemporary music show no significant difference

with the p-value of .109.

Comparison results mark that there are differences in attitudes towards contemporary music between the participants that have less than three years music learning experience with the participants that have more than three years music learning experience. Similar research in conjunction with participants' musical background and their performance were carried out in one of the university in Hong Kong (Mang, 2007). 75 subjects participated in the research and were divided into 3 different groups. Group 1 is made up of 25 full time music undergraduate students while Group 2 is made up of 25 choristers who have choral experience but do not receive formal music training. Group 3 served as a control group, consists of 25 participants who do not receive formal music training. Participants of Group 1 and Group 2 performed significantly better compared to Group 3. These findings show that participants with music experiences are equipped with more musical knowledge and thus perform better. It supports the differences of attitudes among participants with less than three years of experience and participants with more than three years experience. The later tend to equip with more musical knowledge and are more open-minded to new music.

For research question three, the mean scores for music theory major participants ($M=3.05$; $SD=0.93$) were slightly lower than the performance major student ($M=3.06$; $SD=1.01$). However, the p-value in T-test analysis shows no noteworthy difference between music theory major and performance major participants.

The attitudes of participants towards contemporary music are the same despite majoring in different subject. Findings by other researcher shows that 96% of the students majoring in different subject including Mandarin, arts, music, communication, business, and geography are willing to appreciate or approach to contemporary music (Chao, 2007). On the other hand, similar study had been done with music teachers. Results shows that 94% of the respondents majoring in piano performance, public music education, vocal music, instrumental music, music theory and music production are willing to appreciate or approach to contemporary music (Chao, 2007). These findings support the current research's result where different majored does not affect participants' attitudes towards contemporary music. Their attitudes towards contemporary music are similar.

Implications

This research suggests that university students' attitudes towards contemporary music can be useful for music educators to develop and improve ways in teaching. Education has always been an important course since ancient time (Lin, 2014) and music is one of the most important and spiritual educations (Liang, 1959). So far, Guangxi Arts University only introduces contemporary music appreciation classes in music curriculum. However, since year 2014, the school shows continuous effort of encouraging the development of contemporary music by organizing contemporary music composing competition. The effort could be expand to include contemporary

music in other music courses such as composition and performance. Inclusion of contemporary music in music curriculum is made possible through this research as it suggest the attitude of students' towards contemporary music.

As mentioned by Williams (1972), most of the researches have been focusing on the musical ability and the prediction of success in music. One of the reasons for the neglect of the attitudes is the lacking of information and the effect of instruction upon attitudes (Williams, 1972, p. 362). Educators should imply different pedagogies in teaching different groups of students, as they possess different attitudes towards learning. Students' attitudes is one of the important aspects in education, yet numerous studies indicate that recent general music courses overlook or underestimate the importance of students' attitudes as the main factor to build appreciative musical response (Bullock, 1975, p.111).

Different musical traditions and aesthetical values of the East and the West make it difficult for contemporary music to develop in China (Wang, 1995). Distinct culture and aesthetical perspective result in the lack of attention by universities in China towards contemporary music. One of the research results proved that academic institution is not the main entity for students to get information about contemporary music, as it is less supported or not included in the curriculum. Nevertheless, one of the results shows that students are eager to learn more about contemporary music in universities and are willing to spend time studying about contemporary music. Introduction of contemporary

music relating classes in Guangxi Arts University would help to develop local contemporary music scene and also contribute to the development of contemporary music in other academic institution in China. Classes relating to contemporary music could be not only introduced in music appreciation course but could also further develop into different fields such as performance, composition, and theoretical analysis.

Result of this study shows no significant differences between attitudes of male and female participants towards contemporary music. Also, there were no differences in attitudes of participants who major in different subjects. These might be because the participants do not have clear definition towards contemporary music. It is believed that students might change their attitudes for having better understandings on contemporary music.

Recommendations for Future Research

Findings of this research could be applied to other academic institutions that have similar contemporary music curriculum. Further investigation could be carried on to achieve greater survey distribution. Sample collections are not limited only to Guangxi Art University but can involve other academic institutions as well. Survey shall include institutions from different regions and communities to gather more information regarding students' attitudes towards contemporary music.

The content of questionnaire could be improved. Firstly, using more specific questions and neutral questioning approach, and restraining the use of unpleasant words. Secondly, through this study, it is observed that teachers affected some of the participants' attitudes towards contemporary music. Teachers' encouragement increases the students' interest towards contemporary music and shapes their positive attitude. Therefore, teachers' attitudes towards contemporary music are equally important in future investigation. Researchers shall take note on teachers' attitudes, to increase research reliability and to avoid bias responses from participants.

Further investigation of this research can include comparison between students from cities with different degree of development in China. For example, comparing the attitudes of students towards contemporary music in Shanghai and Lan Zhou. Different degree of development might have caused the students to receive different exposure towards arts and thus affect their attitude towards new ideas in music.

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