

Responding to the Learning Needs of the Chinese Students Enrolled In the College of Music and the Performing Arts of St. Paul University Manila

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I. Introduction

In 2019, Chinese students have started enrolling as cohorts in various colleges of St. Paul University Manila. While the university welcomed the influx of students, there was very little time to put up structures of support. While the university was already using English as the language of instructional delivery, managing a class with mixed English competencies among students posed teaching challenges that had to be dealt with immediately. After the pandemic happened, those challenges had to be dealt with through online instructional technologies that suffered from connectivity issues in the Philippines. Consequently, the university had to deal with the China firewall that prevented the use of popular websites like Google and Facebook that were used in most of the classes not involving Chinese students.

St. Paul University Manila declares that its mission is to deliver holistic education to its students. This includes Chinese students. However, the execution of this mission has become more challenging because of cultural barriers. Given that the tertiary education in the university is a natural extension of music education in basic education, and graduate courses are delivered given undergraduate competencies learned at the undergraduate level, holistic education has to face instructional and formative bottlenecks concerning Chinese students. As such, this study seeks to address those bottlenecks to adequately respond to the learning needs of Chinese students, and in this case, those that study in the College of Music and the Performing Arts where most of the co-authors of this paper are based.

II. Internationalization of Education

Finardi and Rojo (2015) wrote that because of globalization after World War 2, new models of higher education emerged, particularly moving from elite to mass education, enrollment and diversity in higher education increased, and education-work competency matching, research, competition, and internationalization became more important. They also added that higher education is highly correlated with the country's economic growth and "If an institution wishes to become a centre of international excellence, it needs both to attract students and researchers from around the world encouraging student mobility" (p. 20). Today, international education has become associated with transnational, borderless, and cross-border education (Knight, 2015). The second and the third concepts give a different emphasis on the term "border"; however, Knight posits that internationalization "relates to all aspects of education and the role that it plays in society" (p. 2) and that a new working definition must be proposed given its ambiguity. Hence, Knight asserted that "Internationalization at the national, sector, and institutional levels may be defined as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education" (p. 2).

The overall plan of the school is very important to carry out international education in universities (Zhang, 2020). Strategic planning is the basis for the successful implementation of university education. While some universities have begun international teaching practice, most of these programs are independent and lack

systematic planning, which affects the implementation of programs and activities, Zhang clarified. Migration has also created a need for standardized curriculum across the globe which requires transnational planning (Hajisoteriou & Neophytou, 2020). Systematic planning has even become more important after the COVID-19 pandemic happened (Gultekin, 2021) as many countries had to immediately move towards distance education and deal with the problems arising from the lack of any preparatory planning.

III. Internationalization of Chinese Education

Frezghi and Tsegay (2019) stated that internationalization is the primary catalyst of development in China. Guo, Guo, Yochim, and Liu (2021) wrote that "Internationalization has become a strategic policy priority for many Chinese higher education (institutions) in the process of becoming world-class universities" (para. 1). The Chinese government shapes the internationalization of higher education through "law, funding, planning, and assessment" (p. 643). However, Frezghi and Tsegay noted that much has to be done on the international programs of Chinese universities. Guo and associates pointed out that not much is written about the experiences of students who go through internationalization in China or abroad; thus, there is very little information that can help universities provide the needed services to their international students, according to Frezghu and Tsegay. Nevertheless, Li (2016) wrote that "Government regulation and supervision are deeply embedded in the daily operation of Chinese institutions owing to political anxieties and economic considerations" (p. 47).

Quiang (2011) reported that there has been a steady increase of younger Chinese studying abroad. In the 1980s, graduate students were highest. In the 1990s, undergraduate international students were on the rise. In 2011, Chinese high school international students already constituted at least half of the total Chinese students who study abroad. Alongside these developments, there is a growing call from the Chinese government to ensure the improvement of the quality of education in China as documented in the 2010 *National Outline for Medium- and Long-Term Educational Reform and Development (2010-2020)* and strengthened by the national working conference in Beijing on higher education quality control and assurance in 2012. Liu (2016) argued that "the education-first culture, the saving culture, and the extended-family culture" (p. 41) of the Chinese fuel the movement of Chinese students to gain international education. And yet, Guo and associates (2021) found that some Chinese students perceive internationalization as Westernization, question the prominence of English in local universities, and are concerned about the lack of equality in students' access to international education.

IV. State of Higher Music Education in China

Ho (2016) in *Popular Music, Cultural Politics, and Music Education in China* posited that music and music education are sociopolitical constructions of nationalism and multiculturalism in China. Music and the other arts are considered important in forming "responsible, cohesive, and robust societies" (p. 9). Hence, they have been used for a variety of purposes including but not limited to cultural awareness, propaganda, cultural dialogue, formation of socio-political movements, and other modes of empowerment. Ho argued that globalization shapes the westernization and Asianization of Asia, and a homogenizing force, internationalization of music education facilitates the "distribution of music cultures in school music education" (p. 7). Similarly, social, political, and cultural changes shape China's education policy and the content of the music curriculum, Ho added, towards a harmonious socialist society.

However, China's social education system through music education is far from perfect and contributes to the serious lag of music and art education in China (Lujiao, 2018). Adding to the problem are the contradictions between students' musical preferences and what teachers want to teach them (Jing, 2016), and teachers who are reported to be the weakest link in music art education (Zhihui, 2015). The China Conservatory of Music is "the highest learning institution in China in education and study in Chinese music and specializes in training talents in performing" (para. 1), according to the admission platform for study in China, BestEduChina.com. Focusing on traditional Chinese music, the conservatory has built relationships with international music institutions in Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Korea, United States, Canada, France, Germany, Britain, Austria, and Australia, all of which are developed countries in the global north, and produced graduates

who have won in international music competitions (BestEduChina.com, 2016). A report by Daxue Consulting stated that music education is an expanding market in China supported by the growing popularity of Western instruments and music education certification (that can increase the access of a student to colleges and universities) that could positively impact the demand for Western music education outside of China.

V. International Music Training for Chinese Students

The western musical instrument that has the longest history in China is the piano. Guoming (2020) wrote that the piano part of vocal music and an artistic director known for piano are considered to be guarantees of good singing in China. In 2012, Huang wrote about the "cultural fever" arising from more than 100 million Chinese who nurtured an interest in Western classical music that have "transcultural affinities in Confucian traditional values of artful self-cultivation and virtue, while simultaneously acting as a signifier of modernity and individual creativity" (p. 161). Despite this, many Chinese students opt to study abroad because of the following: (1) personal enrichment; (2) meeting different people; (3) potentials of future employment; (4) enhancing language skills; (5) avoiding college entrance exams in China; (6) migration; (7) peer influence; (8) better environment; and (9) parental pressure. In 2018, it was reported that over 600,000 Chinese students study in Western universities, more than half of which go to the US. This made possible a win-win situation for all concerned as students gain training unavailable in China, China's workforce is enriched, and Western universities earn from the influx (Barnes, 2018). The safety in the US perceived by students in China during the pre-Trump period resulted in the Chinese constituting around 17 percent of the international students in the US. With Trump, however, the attention of Chinese students is led elsewhere around the world.

In 2017, however, a for-profit Chinese company co-owned by the Chinese government offered to buy the Westminster Choir College in New Jersey. Western classical music has become a big business in China with new concert halls, opera houses, and piano factories opening in China's cities (Tsioulcas, 2018). As Western classical music has become a status symbol in China and Westminster is known as a premium brand in the US, the purchase of Westminster can only mean larger revenues for China. Support for the purchase comes from an experience of Chinese appreciation of western classical music and respect of its teachers, added Tsioulcas. Today, Bard Conservatory in New York offers "a five-year double-degree program in the Liberal Arts and selected Chinese instruments... in partnership with the Central Conservatory of Music (CCOM) in Beijing" (Bard Conservatory, n.d.). In 2019, St. Paul University Manila opened its College of Music and the Performing Arts to Chinese students. Chinese students' growing disillusionment with music education in the US (Fish, 2018) is paving the way for new music education markets around the world.

VI. Philippine International Education

According to the Commission on Higher Education (2016), the internationalization of Philippine higher education is following the 1987 Philippine Constitution and Republic Act No. 7722 also known as the Higher Education Act of 1994, which honor the country's international agreements and commitments in higher education. The Commission on Higher Education differentiates between internationalization and international education by saying that the former has a more comprehensive framework allowing for "the inclusion of different forms, providers, and products of cross-border education apart from internationalization initiatives at home that entails the incorporation of international dimensions in the curriculum and the learning process" (p. 1). Due in part to the ASEAN integration, the Philippines (1) enhanced the quality assurance framework and its implementation in higher education institutions; (2) enabled country- and region-wide mobility and market-access of educational stakeholders; and (3) supported international linkages of tertiary education schools. The two interconnected foundations of the internationalization of Philippine higher education are internationalization at home and cross-border internationalization.

In the past 30 years, the Philippines has participated in the internationalization of higher education (Jianliang, 2012) with efforts including foreign student recruitment, collaborations with foreign universities, participation in academic exchanges, and the like. In the context of the One Belt and One Road Initiative of

China, China considers the Philippines as worthy of attention given its membership in the ASEAN and as a participating country in the Maritime Silk Road (Xingyu, 2019). The entry of Chinese students in St. Paul University Manila is a result of the aggressive efforts of Chinese internationalization agents who see a lot of potential in the internationalization efforts of China in the Philippines and vice versa under the Duterte administration.

St. Paul University Manila has established both kinds of internationalization efforts by internationalizing the content and processes embedded in the curriculum delivered to local students and opening its doors to international students. In the latter, it delivers academic programs off-shore and welcomes international students on the physical campus. Due to COVID-19, all curricular delivery to international students and Filipinos residing abroad is done through flexible and online (synchronous and asynchronous) modalities. Chinese students are welcomed in all five colleges namely, the College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences (CNAHS), The College of Education (CE), the College of Business and Management (CBM), the College of Music and the Performing Arts (CMPA), and the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). Chinese music students are part of Masteral and Doctoral academic programs in the CMPA. Still, in its early stages, the delivery of instruction to Chinese students is constantly monitored and evaluated to achieve its target graduate outcomes.

VII. Philippine Tertiary Education in Music

According to Jacinto (2019), with the lengthening of the 10-year basic education system of the Philippines to a 13-year enhanced basic education system came the inclusion of music as a regular subject that begins in Grade 1 until Grade 10. Music is integrated into the Arts and Design track of the senior high school program. The focus of Grade 1 to 6 is on music theories while that of Grades 7 to 12 is the historical and cultural context of music, Jacinto added. Maramba (n.d.) wrote that it was in 1920 that a Filipino received the Music Teacher's Diploma and the first tertiary level education in music. Six years after the Bachelor of Music was offered. In 1927, a Filipino religious, Sr. Baptista Battig, OSB, earned her Master of Arts in Music at the University of Santo Tomas (UST). In 1930, Centro Escolar University and Santa Isabel College opened their Conservatory of Music and Music Teacher's Course, respectively. Seven years later (1937), UST opened the degree of Master of Music. Two years after (1939), the Philippine Women's University established its music department. The St. Paul College Music Department opened in 1940 Sr. Marie de St. Charles Freitag, SPC. In 1949, it was recognized by the Bureau of Private Education and was given the right to offer the Bachelor of Music degree in piano and voice. Currently, most of the higher education institutions offering college courses in music are in the National Capital Region; however, music appreciation is offered in non-music academic degrees. Outside of the universities and conservatories of music, community music service-learning projects are organized by college students of state universities and colleges like the University of the Philippines (Najera, 2014).

Chinese education in the Philippines, starting as an education catering to a few overseas Chinese and students of Chinese origins, developed into tertiary education available for everyone (See, 2016). Today Chinese tertiary education in the Philippines refers not to undergraduate courses taught in Chinese but teaching a Chinese language course and culture taught by foreign teachers. A Bachelor's degree in Chinese Studies at the Ateneo de Manila University is delivered in English. There is no music degree program taught in the Chinese language. Hence, Chinese students who intend to learn music in the Philippines must learn English.

VIII. Philippines-Chinese Musical Connections

Mainstream music education in the Philippines is informed mainly by Western classical music. However, Nicolas (2016) wrote that Chinese music is also part of Filipino music history. Mostly performed in Buddhist and Taoist temples, it has "several genres of music and theatrical plays are performed according to the calendrical cycle of temple rites and feasts, as well as in funeral and death rites" (p. 372). Fookiennan'guan music is used in yearly music festivals in "Fujian, Guangzhou, Taipei, Hong Kong, Manila, Jakarta, Malaysia,

and Singapore" (p. 378). The three historical lineages of Chinese music in the Philippines are the maritime flat gongs, the dragon and lion dance flat gongs, and the theatrical plays of the Chinese community during the Spanish colonial period.

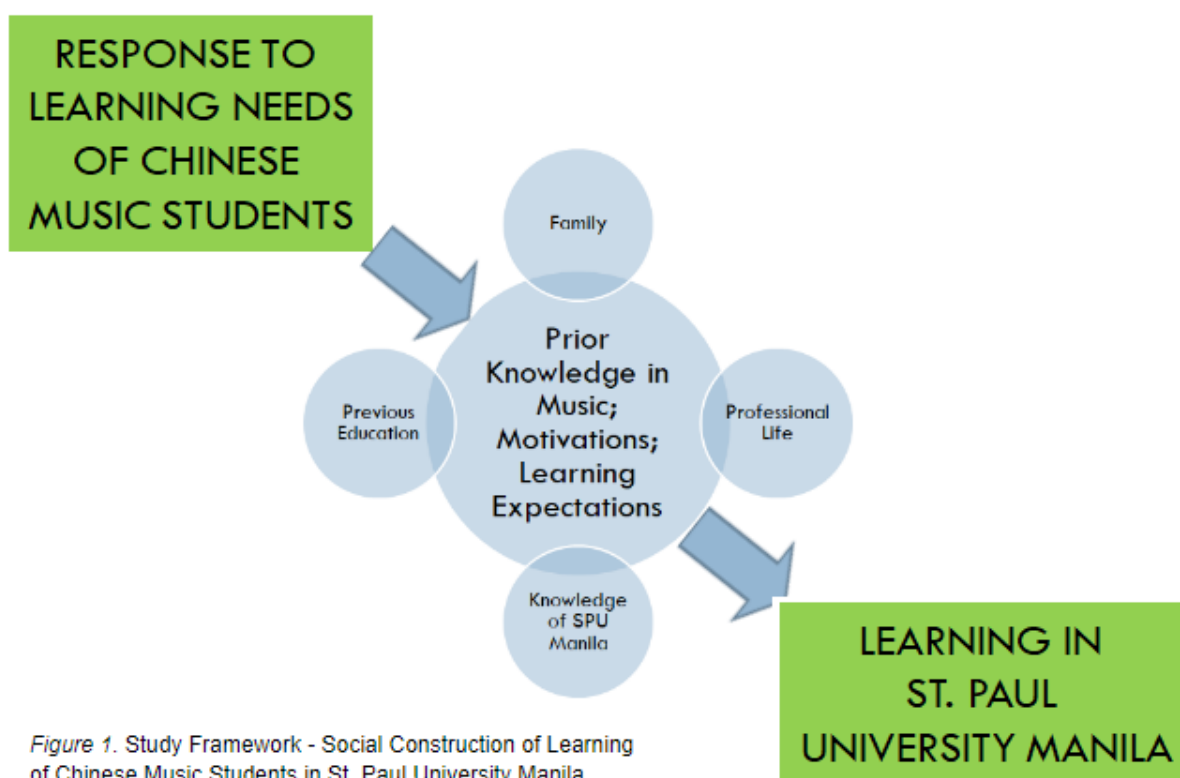
What creates a greater connection to mainstream Filipino music is China's affiliation with Western classical music that was initially spurred by the New Culture Movement in 1919, and the establishment of western music programs in different universities. The mainstreaming of western music in 1935 solidified the presence of western music in China. China's entry into the global economy after the cultural revolution ended in 1976 and its open-door policies in the 1980s opened the floodgates of Chinese and western popular music and instruments in China (Yang & Saffle, 2017). In 2018, Filipino singer KZ Tandingan impressed Chinese audiences in the Chinese music competition titled *Singer 2018*. In the competition, Tandingan sang a Mandarin love song which moved the Chinese live audience to tears (ABS-CBN News, 2018). UK artist Jessie J's victory (Leung, 2018), despite not having sung any Mandarin song unlike Tandingan, shows that Chinese audiences welcome western music and artists, and have the same musical sensibility as Filipinos.

Synthesis and Research Gap. The review of the literature revealed that Chinese students are seeking international education for various reasons. The Chinese government, prioritizing quality education, provides structural support to the movement of Chinese students to other countries offering classical music education that is not found in Mainland China. With the US making it challenging for Chinese students to study in American music schools, attention on other schools offering classical music education is transferred to alternative higher education destinations like the United Kingdom, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong, which are known for western classical music.

The Philippines, informed and driven by its western classical music education tradition, which is sought after by a growing Chinese market, is becoming one of the Asian destinations for said education. However, the Philippines, despite its long history with western classical music training at the tertiary level, does not offer Chinese language training in the said area. Given that language competency is key to learning and accessing general well-being, learning will be difficult for Chinese students who struggle with English. However, acknowledging that learning the English language and classical western music can be improved with the help of other support structures, it is worth noting that efforts to improve structures of support for Chinese students in St. Paul University Manila will help not just the Chinese students but also the university in becoming an ideal learning destination for incoming Chinese students who want to learn western classical music. So far, not a lot is written about those needed support structures since this is the first instance where Chinese cohorts have enrolled in the College of Music and the Performing Arts.

Study Framework. Given the language barrier that Chinese students will encounter when studying music in the Philippines, particularly in St. Paul University Manila's College of Music and the Performing Arts, this study sought to find ways to help them learn better despite it. Learning is largely understood as a mental process shaped by internal and external elements, according to Western Governors University (2020). Internal elements include prior knowledge (Hailikari, Katajavuori, & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2008), motivations (Chuter, n.d.), and expectations (Heidhues, Koszegi, & Strack, 2018). The social construction of learning of Vygotsky (1978, in Gunawardena, et al., 2016) explained that the social constructivist theory has five phases. (1) sharing and comparing; (2) dissonance; (3) negotiation and co-construction; (4) testing tentative constructions; and (5) statements and application of newly constructed knowledge. These five phases are impacted by external factors. Family and student factors must be considered when trying to understand the determinants of learning achievement (Ishiguro, 2017). Prior knowledge is crucial (Hailikari, Katajavuori, & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2008) in learning; hence, "students' prior knowledge should be taken into consideration in instructional design and curriculum planning" (para. 4). Bloom (in Dochy, De Rijdt, & Dyck, 2002) proposed that if students are given enough time and guidance to learn, they can achieve mastery. In the context of online learning, student learning

and satisfaction depends on engagement in online courses, according to Martin and Bolliger (2018). Anchored mainly on the social construction of learning, this study is guided by the following framework.



IX. Statement of the Problem

This study seeks to answer the question: How should Paulinian administrators address the learning needs of the Chinese students enrolled in the College of Music and the Performing Arts of St. Paul University Manila?

Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

(1) What are the selected students' prior knowledge in music before their entry in St Paul University Manila's College of Music and the Performing Arts?

(2) What are the motivations of the selected students in entering the College of Music and the Performing Arts of St. Paul University Manila?

(3) How do the following contribute to their pursuit of education in St. Paul University Manila?

(3.1) Family;

(3.2) Previous Education;

(3.3) Professional Life;

(3.4) Knowledge of St. Paul University Manila and its College of Music and the Performing Arts?

(4) What are the learning expectations of the selected students?

(5) What action points may be considered to help the Chinese students learn better in the College of Music and the Performing Arts?

X. Methodology

Chinese graduate students enrolled in the course titled *Introduction to Graduate Studies* last academic year 2019-2020 were asked to invite one to two other peers in the graduate school of the College of Music and the Performing Arts of St. Paul University Manila to answer five open-ended questions through journal writing. The said course is an introduction in research in the context of music. A total of 15 graduate students participated voluntarily and anonymously. The questions, originally written in English, were translated to Mandarin before they were given to the participants, while the answers of the participants were translated back to English before they were analyzed. The narrative responses were thematically analyzed. Except for the construct of motivation where themes were derived from existing literature, the rest of the themes were emergent or constructed primarily from their narrative responses.

XI. Results

Prior Knowledge in Music before entry in SPU Manila

The data reveal that the selected Chinese students have significant knowledge about music which they learned in their personal journey and professional journey.

Personal Knowledge of Music. Their knowledge of music started early ("I started to learn the violin at the age of five.") for the participants. Parents were particularly mentioned as instrumental in their learning about music in childhood ("Both my parents like music, my father likes playing Musical Instruments and my mother likes singing, so when I was young, I started to get involved in music. Because of my family environment, I chose to study music in college and study vocal music for four years.) which was sustained until their university years and beyond ("My family encouraged me to study on campus again."). A participant "learned music under the influence of... (his/her/their) mother since (he/she/they) was a child." In another case, interest in music was supported by the whole family ("My family encouraged me..."); hence, learning about music was sustained through a desire for "self-cultivation" ("It is my family that inspired me to improve my music self-cultivation"). The desire for self-cultivation was transformed to perseverance for another student ("I have never given up music until now."), particularly in school where they learned to transform their emotional response to music ("I liked music very much and felt that music could make me happy") into a conscious effort to improve learning ("I want to improve my knowledge of music."), express one's self musically ("Music is a kind of art form that expresses people's thoughts and feelings and social real life by using auditory images formed by sound organization."), or deal with challenges in life more holistically ("Melody is often irresistible to people immediately in the atmosphere of music, so that people forget their troubles, purify the mind."; "Music is an important spiritual culture of human beings. It combines melody, rhythm, pitch, and other elements to form a hearing effect that can move people, and makes people relax their spirits while listening. It has entertainment, treatment, and other effects."). In a specific case, learning about music more is crucial in living a more fulfilling life ("After I became a mother, I want to go back to school and continue my further study, so that my life can be more fulfilling.") It is not surprising that many of them sought for degrees in music in the university. They wrote:

I graduated from the University of Music Education.

I studied music for over twenty years before entering (St. Paul University) Manila.

I have received undergraduate education courses in vocal music, music theory, music appreciation, chorus and conducting, etc.

I... have a professional understanding of music knowledge.

In the university (before entering St. Paul University Manila), they learned Chinese instruments ("My major is *zhudi* or China flute in musicology."), voice ("I majored in vocal music..."), choral music ("my musical specialty was children's choral and vocal music, and occasionally to help some choir piano accompaniment."), and Western ones like the violin ("My major is the violin."), piano ("My specialty in music is playing the piano and how to teach students to play the piano."), and music theory, some of which are as follows:

Music is an important spiritual culture of human beings. It combines melody, rhythm, pitch, and other elements to form a hearing effect that can move people, and makes people relax their spirits while listening. It has entertainment, probation, treatment, and other effects.

Its basic elements include height, strength, length, timbre, and so on. These basic elements are combined to form the common "form elements" of music, such as rhythm, melody, harmony, and power, speed, mode, form, texture, etc. The form elements that constitute music are the means of expression of music. Different types of music may emphasize or ignore some of these elements.

Music is performed using a variety of instruments and vocal techniques, divided into instrumental music, vocal music (such as songs without instrumental accompaniment), and works that combine singing and instruments.

One was particularly knowledgeable in the medical value of music, saying:

Medicine also uses music to assist in the treatment of diseases, often can play the effect of drugs.

Both Chinese and Western music were part of the students' knowledge of music history:

In terms of their historical process and the development history of Chinese music, the ancient Chinese "poetry" is not divided, that is, literature and music are closely related.

The development history of western music can be divided into ancient Greek and Roman music, medieval music, Renaissance music, Baroque music, classical music, romantic music, modern music, and so on.

Knowledge of music is deeply embedded in the personal journeys of the selected students. They consider learning about music as an integral part of their lives inside and outside of their homes or families. The school plays a key role in the development of their knowledge of music. Their knowledge of music makes their lives meaningful and fulfilling. Thus, the students in this study are considered highly knowledgeable in music and are, therefore, passionate learners. This passion for music led them to peers who knew about the graduate programs of St. Paul University Manila. Some of them wrote:

I learned about St. Paul University Manila only through a friend's introduction.

Professional Knowledge of Music. The student informants are working as either music teachers ("I have been a music teacher for 19 years since I started working."); "I worked as a music teacher in a primary school for 16 years.") or performers ("I majored in vocal music before attending the School of Music at St Paul University in Manila."); "Before I entered the Conservatory of Music, I majored in piano."). Thus, their knowledge of music goes beyond what they learned in their families or universities when they were still students ("I graduated from the University of Music Education."). Their knowledge of music is linked with proficiencies

in particular Chinese and Western instruments as mentioned above, a need to have “greater improvement” and “enrich(ing) experiences” in their teaching, particularly Western music (“I want to learn more about Western music.”), improving their English competency (“I want to improve my English level.”), and widening (“improving”) one’s horizon.

XII. Motivations

Internal Motivations. Internal motivations were found to be constituted by improving knowledge in music, credentials, and self.

Improving knowledge in music. Advancement of knowledge of the music field through continuing education was expressed as a major motivating factor (“I chose to enter the College of Music and the Performing Arts of St. Paul University Manila (so) that I can continue to receive systematic study in choral conducting; to improve the skills of choir conducting, enrich the means of choir rehearsal, and to have a deeper understanding and learning of the Choral culture of the Philippines.), especially for those aware of the quality of education the institution can offer (“I learned about the School of Music through the Internet and know that it is a historic school. I thought its learning atmosphere was very good, the teaching management was also very good, and it was not too far away from China, so I chose it. completing a master's degree at St. Paul University of Manila can improve my degree and learn new knowledge.”), and those who desire knowledge beyond their culture (“... to broaden my horizon and understand different music cultures.”; “The advantage of studying in St. Paul University Manila is that I can learn the relevant music knowledge more comprehensively, and, at the same time, I can learn about the music... of the Philippines.”; “... we can understand the situation and characteristics of foreign music education, and compare and analyze the situation in China. At the same time, I can learn the traditional and modern music of Southeast Asian countries.”). As some of the participants are teachers, getting ahead in the area of theory is key (“the academic theory level of music majors has improved.”).

Improving credentials. Many expressed the need for a more advanced degree (“... I want to study for my PhD.”), especially in the context of their being educators (“... looking forward to my continuous learning and improvement in the music major so that I can better teach students.”; “... enables me to absorb teaching experience in my work and study, improve my teaching level, combine Chinese and Western music and better transmit it to students, to realize the teaching philosophy of teaching by words and deeds.”) and their self-improvement (“... After graduation, I can apply all this knowledge to my job.”) and professionals (“... to learn more and improve my professional level.”).

Improving self. The desire for self-improvement was found related to their desire to improve knowledge in music and their credentials. Improvement of the self meant widening one's horizons (“To broaden my horizon and understand different music cultures.”), improving skills (“... After graduation, I can apply all this knowledge to my job.”; “... to learn more and improve my professional level”; “looking forward to my continuous learning and improvement in the music major, so that I can better teach students”), and realizing “personal academic goals” (“... to realize the teaching philosophy of teaching by words and deeds”). Improvement of the self through professional skills upgrading was found linked to external motivations.

External Motivations. One participant noted: “I will study hard and complete my study with excellent results.” Excellent results, expressed as sub-themes of external motivation, include (1) impressive features of St. Paul University Manila, (2) family support, (3) fulfillment of teaching requirements, (4) professional advancement, and (5) social recognition in China.

Impressive features of St. Paul University Manila. Knowledge of the host university is an adequate motivator for a Chinese student. Equally crucial is the Chinese government’s endorsement (“St. Paul University Manila is one of the overseas universities recommended by China's Ministry of Education.”) of the host

university and the latter's educational legacy ("I think St. Paul University Manila is a famous university with a long history and profound culture."). One participant pointed out that the quality of the faculty, teaching management, and school environment in the latter also attract enrollees ("There are famous professors in the university and the school environment is beautiful. So, I like this university very much."); "The teaching management is also very good. The teachers are very good, I chose it.". Another participant explained that "domestic schools also need teachers with overseas study experience, especially the universities with strength (in that area)."

Family support. Receiving family support was considered crucial in one's desire to pursue graduate studies. For one student, the support from the family came before the actual application to graduate school ("My family very much supports me to get a better promotion in the choral major, because my wife is also a piano teacher."). Meanwhile, for another student family support was given after acceptance to graduate studies ("After I decided to study, I got strong support from my family... so I cherish this learning opportunity.").

Fulfillment of teaching requirements. University teaching in China requires higher academic degrees from teachers. This was supported when one participant expressed: "I just graduated from the university, and I saw that the... academic qualifications are getting higher and higher." One participant expressed: "It was difficult for me to find a good job with my current academic qualifications. So, I took advantage of my youth and learning strength just after graduation, and then listened to the teacher's introduction, so I came to the College of Music and the Performing Arts of St. Paul University Manila to continue my postgraduate education." Achieving professional requirements will lead to professional advancement for some of the participants.

Professional advancement. Aside from the families of the participants, their "college leaders," also support international studies. "I can be promoted to a higher professional title in my work," revealed one participant. Another participant said, "I can enhance my experience, and get the support of my family and school leaders." Hence, there is institutional support for Chinese students to pursue graduate studies outside of China, especially as it relates to instructional upgrading ("because I am a university teacher, it is also the highest degree of requirement, so I want to learn more knowledge to teach students or the needs of work. All these will be the motivation and source for me to study for a postgraduate degree in the College of Music and the Performing Arts.").

Social recognition in China. Given the above is achieved, social recognition immediately follows for those with advanced degrees. One participant noted that "St. Paul University Manila in the Philippines can allow our Chinese students to study and study for a degree, where they can get certification and social recognition at home." This points back to the impressive features of St. Paul University Manila which are given value by Chinese society as a whole.

XIII. Discussion

Factors affecting Pursuit of Graduate Studies

Given the data on prior knowledge of music and the motivations of the participants to pursue graduate degrees, the study supports the findings of previous studies that noted family, previous education, professional life, and knowledge of the host university as factors affecting entry to advanced studies.

Family. Family is both an orienting and reinforcing factor, meaning, it commences interest in music and reinforces or sustains staying in music as a field of interest and study. Their families are willing to bear all the necessary expenses for further education, including financial support, such as tuition and other related

expenses ("My family undertook everything."; "(My) family is to support continued education... (and) provide the tuition."). Overseas education, being more expensive compared to local education, requires a lot of material and financial resources to complete. Thus, without the material and financial support of the family, any advanced studies abroad will face major challenges. The sheer fact that the family does not pose any issues is an indicator that pursuing advanced studies will go smoothly ("Studying in a Manila University will not affect my family."). Beyond that, spiritual support was also acknowledged as a go-signal ("... my family provides me with strong material and spiritual support.").

This means the participant will undertake graduate studies without any major challenges ("so my study is happy and unstressful."), especially, if those who have parental tasks are assisted by their families ("Although my children are very young, it will be very hard for me to take care of them alone."). Add to this, some families, support greater learning, in general ("The family has a strong sense of identity with learning."; "My family also loves life, learning, and music, so they support me to further my study."). Another participant attested: "My family believes that everyone should set the goal of lifelong learning to continue to grow and succeed." This suggests that family support will not be an area the university must address to facilitate the success of the students ("they want me to realize my dream."). Noting the perseverance for the sake of family that the participants, and, perhaps, students of music learn early and continuously, success in graduate studies is more likely to happen than not ("I will try to stick to it for my family, for myself.").

Previous education. Previous education frames one's appreciation for the host institution and internal and external motivations to pursue advanced studies abroad. Early education in music is seen as instrumental in seeking a higher degree in the same ("My previous education... prompted me to continue to study music, because I learned music from an early age."). One participant shared: "... the university education also laid a good foundation for my further study." Taught to be a teacher, a participant underscored learning as a factor in undertaking advanced studies in music ("I am a college teacher. I give vocal art courses to my students.").

Previous education opened the doors for the participants to appreciate systematic and professional knowledge they can learn from an overseas university like St. Paul University Manila ("... during my undergraduate education, the teachers in the university gave me a lot of systematic and professional knowledge, which made me realize that there is no limit to learning."), and that opened the door for them to be musical leaders ("... during my study in university, I served as the planner and director of hundreds of concerts, which helped me to present music art and gained rich experience in planning and operation."), advanced music performers ("I hope that studying in this college will broaden my horizon and enable me to get in touch with advanced music and performance.").

Professional life. Professional knowledge, that is knowledge gained while in specific areas of work, also figured well in the participants' knowledge of music (before their entry in St. Paul University Manila) and motivations ("I believe that my professional learning experience and work experience will help me to have a clearer goal and direction in the new stage of the study."; "My professional life prompted me to continue to study music."). Their professional knowledge in teaching supported their interest in St. Paul University Manila as a higher degree-giving institution ("The teaching profession has made me understand that teachers must keep pace with the times in teaching and seek to master more teaching methods to bring more and better education to students."). Learning to love students ("I am a middle school teacher and have worked for 6 years. I give the students piano lessons and music appreciation lessons, my students love my lessons and I love being with the students."), aside from sharing their knowledge of music ("because I often serve as a training lecturer for music teachers in primary and middle schools, I also have more understanding and thinking about the present chorus and classroom music education in primary and middle schools."), is also a contributing factor ("I love my profession, and I am very proud to see my students improve in my class.").

Working while still studying in college ("During my study in university, I also participated as a singing and conducting teaching assistant of the school choir, which gave me a comprehensive understanding of the choral conducting major.") and still learning from teachers while already working ("In my working life... I have come into contact with different people from all walks of life, and I have had a deep and intuitive feeling about the basic music education at every stage in China.") also paved the way for an interest in graduate studies. The overlap of formal learning and work-life served as a precursor to learning in graduate school towards a better work-life ("During my college life, I followed the guidance and teachings of my tutor, practiced my basic skills hard, and participated in evening performances, which greatly improved my professional skills and stage performance."); "In addition to attending classes every day, I would go to the piano room to practice my professional skills. I had a very fulfilling life, which greatly improved my professional knowledge and skills."). Identifying personal knowledge gaps while at work became a signal for one participant ("... never been exposed to Southeast Asian music or performances, I also need to have a wide range of knowledge for my work.). Being in a competitive work environment also makes one see the importance of getting ahead of others through one's advanced education ("I hope that studying in this college will broaden my horizon and enable me to get in touch with advanced music and performance.").

Knowledge of the host university. Finally, knowledge of the excellence of the host university ("The college is the most famous music school in the Philippines. and it has been recommended by many Chinese music professionals."), whether introduced by a teacher or a peer, served as a good reinforcement to making the first tangible step to achieving an advanced degree. Credible educators count a lot ("... it has knowledgeable and experienced professors who bring students from all over the world to learn professional knowledge."). The participants also valued other traits of faculty members that went well with their knowledge ("Understanding, polite, and knowledgeable professors."; "They were very responsible, patient and kind, and always helpful."). One participant who enrolled while the school was in remote learning mode said:

I was introduced by my teacher to study at the College of Music and the Performing Arts of St. Paul University Manila. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I have not been able to go to the Philippines and have been taking online classes. However, when I took online classes, I deeply felt the professors' conscientiousness and profound knowledge, which also encouraged me to study hard and complete my studies successfully.

The participants did not present any reason to hesitate to come to the university to study for an advanced degree in music. Even if it is a sectarian school, the largely non-religious participants did not see it as a problem ("The university... is a large private missionary school."). If at all, it presented to the participants an opportunity to "improve (their) vision, (and) become more open and international."). They believe that the school, despite or because of its background, "will enable (them) to learn advanced international teaching concepts and rehearsal techniques." They also appreciated the university's "comprehensive understanding of music" which enables them to make their teaching "more colorful" because they become "more exposed to music and performance of all types." As such, it is noticeable that the participants, while well-informed in music theory and performance, were eager to open their worlds to learning outside of the norm of education that they were familiar with and used to in China.

Learning Expectations

Given the above, the participants expressed the following learning expectations:

1. Learning to earn an advanced degree: ("Make further progress academically and earn a PhD."; "...continue with my PhD after completing my master's degree.")

2. Broadening one's horizon: ("Broaden horizons."; "... expand my academic vision, and grasp the latest information of the discipline.")
3. Increasing knowledge in specific areas such as:
 - a. Systematic knowledge: ("I hope to gain systematic... knowledge...")
 - b. Professional knowledge: (I hope to gain... professional knowledge...")
 - c. Theoretical knowledge: ("My learning goal is to master the basic theory of musicology... (and) to be familiar with the achievements of the latest musicology theory development.")
 - d. Western music: ("I don't know much about western music teaching methods, but I am also learning by groping and absorbing more and better experiences.")
 - e. Philippine music: ("I look forward to having the opportunity to observe the daily rehearsal and performance of the Philippine choir, to understand the current situation of The Philippine choir, the creation of the choir works, and the influence of the local culture on the development of the Filipino choir, etc."; "To learn more about the history, background, and development of the Philippines' music and meanwhile, to compare it with Chinese music education and learn from it.")
 - f. Southeast Asia: ("... the study of Southeast Asian music culture, environment, characteristics, enlightenment and reference to China.")
4. Improving professionalism in music education: ("My goal is to improve my professionalism.")
 - a. Improving one's performance at work: ("... my goal is to improve my professional level and better serve my work in the future.")
 - b. Developing one's future career: ("... to lay a foundation for my future career development.")
5. Improving research capacity: ("I hope to focus on the cultivation of scientific research ability.")

Action points for consideration for improved learning of Chinese students

The participants also expressed specific areas that they believe require action that can facilitate their greater learning. The first is the provision of assistance related to English translation ("... I... hope to have more English translation solutions"; "... to teach us, so that the English level has a rapid improvement."). This includes providing a teacher who knows Chinese who can help guide them ("we hope to have a teaching management teacher who knows Chinese to guide us..."). Second, they hope that the management looks into the care and effective adaptation of the Chinese students in their life in the Philippines ("Learn more about the needs of students and constantly improve the management system. After students arrive in Manila, they hope the school will provide some assistance in life so that students can adapt to life in Manila."). They want to be cared for "just like a family member." Third, they desire a "compact" curriculum with a "timely" and "well-arranged" delivery of the courses. Fourth, they seek a communication tool beyond email that can update them immediately such as WeChat and other instant messaging tools accessible to them ("As the current communication mode is only email, there is no way to communicate instantly in many cases, resulting in some information communication that is not smooth. Hope to have WeChat or other instant messaging tools, convenient communication."). Fifth, they also wish to be familiarized with "the teaching methods and working procedures of Philippine schools" and a way of managing "cultural differences". Sixth, they wish to be constantly updated with their academic progress ("I think the university... can put each of our individual (ratings) each semester, (and) the number of courses completed and want to be taken (through a) foreign students' mailbox which can help them track their progress in time and make the necessary follow-ups. Finally, they want to have ways to "coordinate the courses to be taught in advance and the names and contact information of teaching professors" sent to them.

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