

An analysis on piano education in institutions training music teachers in the context of application, teaching experience and pre-school period

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Abstract

Music education for the preschool age group and piano teaching in this context is generally of great interest and in demand. In Turkey, music teacher candidates take piano lessons during their undergraduate education, two of which are compulsory and six are elective. In this process, however, a course on how to teach the piano is not included in the curriculum of the music teaching department. Therefore, except specific elective courses delivered in certain universities in the previous academic years, there is not a course that includes information on how to teach the piano, which is in such high demand in general and is an introductory course in many educational institutions, to both preschool period and different age groups, and whose methods are employed during piano education on what to do about the technical teaching of the instrument. The researcher has discussed the importance of the subject by giving examples from the literature in his article and has made various suggestions regarding the issue. Therefore, in terms of its structure, this study is a comprehensive literature review that examines the studies related to music education and makes various suggestions.

Keywords: Pre-school Education, Music Education, Piano Education

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1. Introduction

Preschool education is considered the most valuable period in an individual's life, and therefore, the education during this period is also of critical importance (Tuncer, 2015). The ages of 0–6 years are the crucial years when the child's development speed and learning capacity are the highest. The child's body, personality structure and the foundations laid during this period have a higher chance of developing in the same direction in the following years. It has been observed that most of the behaviours acquired during childhood shape the personality structure, attitude, habits, beliefs and values of the individual in adulthood (Balci et al., 2012; Yalman Polatlar & Saygin, 2020).

Music is one of the most influential and essential techniques used in the education of preschool children with regular and special education needs while supporting all developmental areas (Mertoglu, 2002, p. 29).

Another objective of music education is to develop the child's sense of rhythm and love of music by enabling the child to express by hearing and thinking freely with rhythm and melody (Akkas, 1993). To achieve this, children should be motivated with activities that are suitable for this purpose and should have a good time with songs, games with songs, anthems, folk songs and rhythmic movements that are related to daily issues that will attract their attention and allow them to enjoy their leisure time cheerfully (Yallioglu, 2019).

The piano can be considered as one of the most effective instruments that can be used in providing students with basic musical knowledge and skills, training their voices and teaching musical styles through accompaniment and harmony studies (Gun, 2014).

Within the scope of instrument training, one of the crucial dimensions of music education is piano education. The piano is an educational instrument that is easy to adapt and includes many sound ranges, thus developing the individual practically and theoretically. As a result, the piano is defined by music educators as the most universal and fundamental instrument in terms of playing, gaining listening and reading skills, understanding and feeling the music, forming musical knowledge and forming a basis for other musical studies (Bayirli, 2020; Kasap Tecimer, 2004). In all fields of music education, such as general music education, instrument training and music theory education, the teacher can give the students the information from the lessons with piano to create a musical environment. It provides students with an opportunity to understand better technical and theoretical dimensions of the dynamics (nuance, expression and tempo) of music. In addition, it enables the student to experience the musical atmosphere in the classroom by accompanying the piano.

The aim of the piano lesson should be to arouse interest in the instrument and education in the child beginning from the very first lesson. Technical knowledge takes second place. The student who starts the class is often timid and anxious (Ercan, 2008). Providing the student with a repertoire suitable for their level during the instrument training and performing the student's education following their level of readiness can be seen as other essential factors that will increase the student's performance and ensure more effective learning (Ozmentes, 2013). According to Cevik (2007), 'the development of piano playing skills that an individual is supposed to gain through piano education should include both technical growth and musical development' (Bayirli, 2020).

1.1. Theoretical framework

The first 6 years of a child's life are of great importance as they constitute the milestones of their development, and the basic knowledge and skills are acquired during these early development years (Yallioglu, 2019). Piano education requires a disciplined and devoted study. The fact that children start

piano education from a young age gives them the habit of regular research, on the one hand, and the sense of responsibility, on the other. In addition, thanks to piano education, children's acceptance and self-confidence among their friends are encouraged. Moreover, there is a significant relationship between piano education and controlling stage excitement and emotions (Yallioglu, 2019).

One of the essential factors in achieving success in piano education is the student's love of their teacher. The student must be motivated by the information he will receive from his teacher in the piano education he has started, and by receiving positive feedback with the education, he needs to continue his education successfully for many years (Yallioglu, 2019). Since each individual has unique qualities and differences, there is no single method or technique suitable for everyone in piano education. In this context, in the learning environments to be designed considering individual differences, it is imperative to use various methods and techniques in appropriate ways, as well as in the selection of materials to be used and pedagogical stratification (Cimen et al., 2013).

The beginning stage of piano education is a period in which the students gain basic behaviours that they will need in the following years, and therefore, it is of utmost importance. In this process, besides the student's interest and ability, the teacher's method in the first lessons is also essential. In the first lessons, the objective is to teach the necessary terms, such as sitting correctly on the piano, learning the fa and left keys, holding both hands correctly on the keyboard, note, rush values, speed and nuance (Ercan, 2008).

Although there exist several different opinions about the starting age of piano education, it is accepted as 4–6 years by most educators. To receive piano education, they must reach sufficient physical and mental maturity. Therefore, the first lesson with preschool children is fundamental. In this lesson, the teacher can play the piano to provide motivation, ask the child to find the sounds of a piece he knows with one hand on the piano, talk about his friends and interests and gain the child's trust by making him believe that he can establish a good relationship.

Preschool children are at the age of playing games and discovering and learning in games. The most effective way to reach the child is through games. Children of this age group should first play with the piano, and playing the piano should be fun for them to gain regular study habits over time (Isikdemir, 2019).

The piano educator has a significant role in achieving the desired level in piano education of young children. Piano educators' professional competence and personality traits determine the child's success in piano education. The piano educator should help children be successful and support their physical, personal, social and psychological development with a professional approach that attracts the child's attention and can enter the children's world. The primary education of music aims to awaken a love of music in the child, develop the imagination and musical image and ensure the sense of rhythm and ear sensitivity (Pamir, 1983).

The goals and behaviours determined in the piano education of the music teacher candidate are related to their functional piano skills. According to Kasap Tecimer (2005), practical piano skills are 'being able to accompany a given melody, deciphering, transposing, making polyphonic, playing cadence, analysing, improvising, playing together, playing choral and orchestral pieces on the piano' (Bayirli, 2020). In addition to these skills, the prospective teacher should receive training on how to use them in their profession after reaching a certain level of competence in the instrument. In this training of teachers and the approaches for adults, it is necessary to focus on the teaching techniques for the preschool period, which are of great importance today not only in our country but also in the world.

The beginning level piano education should be delivered by piano educators who have the necessary equipment and can plan the educational activities to be carried out according to the learners' developmental characteristics. It is not possible for an educational activity that is designed well above the developmental aspects of a 5-year-old child to succeed. In addition, even if they are in the same age group, the learning levels of each student may differ due to their characteristics. Thus, the piano instructor should know the stages of child development; determine appropriate target behaviours; and decide on teaching methods. Choosing the proper method to teach the determined target behaviours is vital. A method refers to the way followed in doing a job (Isikdemir, 2019). 'Instrument methods are books with note samples, which are used from the beginning in instrument teaching and contain a consistent educational line from easy to difficult' (Say, 2002).

In Turkey, a music teacher can teach different instruments they are proficient at besides their principal instrument. Piano lessons are among the instrument lessons in high demand at formal education institutions and institutions providing amateur music education (Kurtuldu, 2010; Omur, 2004; Serin Ozparlak & Kalkanoglu, 2018). Therefore, the need for a piano teacher is increasing. For this reason, a teacher advanced in the field of the violin can also deliver piano lessons because they have taken piano education lessons during their undergraduate education. However, the music teachers working in the field of piano education in Turkey, especially at the preschool stage, do not receive any teaching methods or courses for different levels of learners from the institutions where they get their teaching certificates or diplomas (Akgul, 2021; Ersoy, 2010; Isikdemir, 2019). Throughout this study, it is aimed to seek answers to various questions about the deficiencies mentioned in the field.

1.2. Purpose of the study

This study aims to find answers to the following questions:

1. What is the structure of piano lessons in undergraduate music teaching programmes that provide professional music education in Turkey?
2. What are the courses and the structure of the programme in music teaching undergraduate programmes that provide professional music education in Turkey and which ensure the practice and professional education development
3. What results have been acquired from the research conducted in the field regarding the professional development and practical experience of teachers?

2. Methodology

In terms of the structure of the study, this study is a review study. Review studies are studies that systematically select the studies on a subject according to specific criteria to prevent the reader from getting lost in the extensive literature. Besides being a valuable collection of a particular topic, review studies are critical for researchers to follow the studies and innovations in their fields (Herdmann, 2006).

The study aims to reveal the current situation, accompanied by scientific studies in the field, by examining the structure of piano lessons given in music teaching undergraduate programmes in Turkey and the courses delivered in these programmes concerning the preschool period education. In this study, several suggestions that will contribute to the literature have been made. In addition, several studies in the literature that evaluate the competence of piano teachers and reveal their undergraduate education's contribution to their professional life in their piano lessons are examined.

With the support of the results obtained in the studies, various suggestions were made on the subject. The scope of this study is limited to the piano teaching and education in the undergraduate music education departments (MED) of education faculties, which offer professional music education in Turkey.

3. Results

3.1. The structure of piano lessons in music education undergraduate programmes providing vocational music education in Turkey

One of Turkey's leading institutions established under professional music education is the MED. MEDs aim to train music teachers for schools that provide secondary education levels in both public and private institutions. There are vocational knowledge lessons, music field knowledge lessons and general culture lessons in the undergraduate education programme curriculum. One of the essential music lessons is the piano lesson (Bayirli, 2020).

Music teacher education basically consists of two main areas. The first of these is the field of educational sciences, which is also defined as formation courses, and the second area is the field of professional music which accordingly aims to provide professional music knowledge and skills to the teacher candidate. Under the circumstances required by the modern world, the education of the ideal music teacher undoubtedly requires the mastery in both of these basic areas of music teacher education. Akbulut (2006) stated that today's music teachers should have the qualities of an 'effective teacher' that can enable students to learn in line with the goals of the applied programme. Akbulut (2006) defined an effective music teacher as a person who has the professional qualifications of music teaching, and expressed these qualities as general culture, field knowledge, pedagogical formation and communication skills. Stephens and Crawley (1994) listed the conditions for being a good teacher under the headings of subject knowledge, ability to teach, classroom management, determining and recording students' level (performance) and understanding that teaching is a lifelong profession (Seker, 2017)

Institutions providing vocational music education are responsible for creating behavioural changes in students in line with the outcomes and goals of their music education programme. While trying to achieve behavioural changes in the learner, the level of benefiting from the instruments of the students is of great importance. Piano education is one of the most important dimensions of professional music. Piano lessons are obligatory in institutions that provide vocational music education because the piano has a very important place in music education, supports their education in the field of music and also helps them in their professional life. The piano is considered as 'One of the most effective instruments that can be used in providing students with basic music knowledge and skills, in voice training of students, in teaching musical forms to students, in accompaniment and harmony studies' (Gun, 2014; Ozkan, 2020).

A lot of changes have been made in the programmes of faculties related to teacher training in Turkey by taking national and international developments into consideration, and they continue to be made (MEB, 2017). The ultimate aim of these changes is that the orientation in teacher education and competencies in the world is focused on 'quality' (Erdem, 2015) and Turkey has made a lot of effort to adapt to this orientation. The realisation of this aim depends on the academicians who are the implementers of the updated teacher training undergraduate programmes; their willingness to implement these programmes; and their belief that the programmes will be successful (Cetin, 2017;

Guskey, 2002; Unsal et al., 2019). Ignoring the opinions of the people who are the implementers of the programme, besides the failure of the change, also causes loss of money, time and energy (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2014). When the literature is examined, it is seen that the undergraduate programmes implemented in 2018 and in previous years are compared within the scope of some departments (Akarsu et al., 2020; Sagdic, 2018; Yucetoker, 2019), in which some parts of the 2018 undergraduate programmes were examined in the context of the opinions of academics (Avcam & Babanoglu, 2020; Aykac & Stebler, 2019; DageTekin & Zorluoglu, 2019; Demir et al., 2021).

According to the music teaching undergraduate programme prepared by the Council of Higher Education in 2006, the ‘piano’ course was included in the programme in seven semesters during the 4-year programme. In addition to this, in the spring semester of the fourth grade, there was another practical course under the name of ‘piano and its teaching’. The piano lesson in the previous music teaching undergraduate programme was included in all eight semesters of the programme (YOK, 2007; Yucetoker, 2019).

Table 1. Piano lessons in music teaching undergraduate programmes (Yucetoker, 2019)

2006 – Music teaching undergraduate programme piano lessons			2018 – Music teaching undergraduate programme piano lessons		
Course	Year	Term	Course	Year	Term
Piano I	First	Fall	Piano I	First	Fall
Piano II	First	Spring	Piano II	First	Spring
Piano III	Second	Fall			
Piano IV	Second	Spring			
Piano V	Third	Fall			
Piano VI	Third	Spring			
Piano VII	Fourth	Fall			
Piano and its teaching	Fourth	Spring			

Kivrak (2003) stated that it would not be effective for piano education to progress together with the field lessons in the music teaching undergraduate programme and stated that conducting the piano lesson together with these lessons is a necessity for the teacher candidates in while gaining knowledge in their professional field.

Music teaching students were taking ‘harmony, counterpoint and accompaniment’ courses in the third, fourth, fifth and sixth semesters of the programme that was in effect in 2007, and as the name suggests, they were able to improve their accompaniment skills on the piano instrument in these lessons. Finally, in order to develop the skills of music teachers to accompany children's songs, they were taking the accompaniment playing course in the fifth semester of the previous programme. However, in the new music teaching undergraduate programme announced by the Council of Higher Education in 2018, this course, which is called ‘piano education’, is only available in two terms of the programme (Yucetoker, 2019).

Table 2. Courses related to piano in music teaching undergraduate programmes (Yucetoker, 2019)

2006 – Courses related to piano in music teaching undergraduate programme			2018 – Courses related to piano in music teaching undergraduate programme		
Course	Year	Term	Course	Year	Term
Harmony–Counterpoint– Accompaniment I	Second	Fall	Harmony and Accompaniment I	Second	Fall

Harmony–Counterpoint– Accompaniment II	Second	Spring	Harmony and Accompaniment II	Second	Spring
Harmony–Counterpoint– Accompaniment I	Third	Fall			
Harmony–Counterpoint– Accompaniment I	Third	Spring			
Accompaniment Playing	Third	Fall			

The current music teaching programme, which is one of the new teacher training undergraduate programmes, seems to be quite different from the 2006 programme. In the 2006 music teaching undergraduate programme, approximately 55%–60% of the content was related to field knowledge, while in the 2018 music teaching programme, the content knowledge education was 45%–50%. In this case, there has been a large decrease in content knowledge education. The lesson that suffered the most from this decline was piano education. The piano lesson, which existed in seven terms in the previous programme, is included in only in two semesters in the new programme. However, when the piano lesson contents of the old and new programmes are examined, there has been no change in the cognitive, musical and psychomotor behaviours that are expected to be acquired by the students and expected to be realised. In short, it is expected that the behaviours that should be acquired in seven semesters are expected to be acquired in two semesters (Yucetoker, 2019).

Piano lessons are obligatory for two semesters in the first year of the music teaching undergraduate programme. In the following years, it can be chosen by the music teacher candidates as an elective course. The piano lessons on the programme are aimed at playing and improving the performance of the music teacher. As seen in the tables, both the piano and its teaching course in the programme that was in force in 2006 are in the last second semester of the last year. In the music teaching undergraduate programme, which was restructured in 2018, there is no course on how to teach the piano instrument, in general, especially in the early preschool period.

3.2. The structure of vocational courses in music teaching undergraduate programme in Turkey

According to Ucan (2018), the music teacher is a fundamental element of the music education process and is responsible for creating desired behavioural changes in children in line with the purposes of music education. In order for the teacher to achieve this aim, it is imperative that he or she has certain qualifications. This duty and obligation necessitates training certain individuals as music teachers, i.e., ‘Music Teacher Training’. However, music teaching qualifications can be gained solely through regular, methodical interactions in a specific environment and within the framework of a planned education, not through random interactions in any environment. According to Tuncer (2012), the qualifications that a music teacher should have are to be able to plan appropriately for the lesson; to carry out activities using the active methods and techniques in the curriculum; to improve the hearing skills of the students; and to have a local, national and universal repertoire in the students. It can be expressed in many ways, such as being able to create, interpreting the measurement results made in order to determine the musical development of the students and providing feedback. In addition, Ozevin and Bilen (2011) stated that, in addition to being equipped with music knowledge and skills, it is expected that the students should be able to direct their students to creative activities and have developed aesthetic feelings (Fidan et al., 2020).

Teaching experience or teaching practice courses offer pre-service teachers various opportunities to put the theoretical knowledge they have learned into practice and apply them. The internship period, known as the teaching experience or teaching practice course, is not only a time to apply the acquired theoretical pedagogy, but also a very valuable time to learn how to manage the classroom (Britzman, 1986; Cakmakci, 2009; Collier, 1999). Although teacher training programmes try to prepare pre-service teachers with method lessons containing theoretical knowledge, it is a lot more difficult to help them exhibit an attitude that takes initiative, enabling them to address various problems in the classroom with practical lessons (Fosnot, 1996; Shapiro, 1991; Tarman, 2012). Based on the deficiencies put forward by the studies in the music teacher education field, instrument training practices should also be given during the undergraduate education of students in the form of teacher practice or school experience.

After the 2018 teacher training undergraduate programmes came into effect, a number of criticisms, discussions and suggestions were brought up regarding both the draft and its implementation in various dimensions. Some of the criticisms are as follows: while preparing the new curriculum, the deficiencies and inadequacies specified in the previously prepared curriculum were not taken into account; the basic principles of curriculum development were not followed; and the credits/hours of the compulsory field courses were taken. Along with the musical instrument teaching methods in arts education, the lessons related to the preschool period have been significantly reduced; have been defined as elective field courses or the lessons; and have not been included in the curriculum (Dagtekin & Zorluoglu, 2019; Kalayci & Baysal, 2020; Ozgul, 2021; Tokcan & Tanguulu, 2019; Ucan et al., 2018; Ulubey & Basaran, 2019; Yurdakal, 2018).

When the music teaching undergraduate programmes of 2007 and 2018 are compared, it is seen that there are differences in the structure and number of pedagogical and practical courses for both the teacher's instrument and general music education.

Table 3. Courses related to vocational knowledge in music teaching undergraduate programme 2006

Course	Year	Term
Introduction to education science	First	Fall
Educational psychology	First	Spring
Teaching principles methods	Second	Fall
Assessment and evaluation	Second	Spring
Instructional technologies and material design	Third	Fall
Special teaching methods I	Third	Spring
Classroom management	Third	Spring
Guidance	Fourth	Fall
School experience	Fourth	Fall
Teaching practice	Fourth	Spring
Turkish education system and school management	Fourth	Spring
Special education	Fourth	Spring
General approaches in preschool music education	Fourth	Spring

As demonstrated in Table 3, when the courses on teaching content knowledge in the music teaching undergraduate curriculum are examined, it is seen that there is a general approaches in preschool music education course offered within the scope of field-specific vocational knowledge in the spring semester of the fourth grade for preschool education. The course description of the general

approaches in preschool music education course includes the following: methods and techniques that will support all areas of development of children and that will be used for a purpose, create music education programmes that will enable the child's personality development and socialisation, express emotions and support creativity, and special methods and techniques that can be applied in music education for children.

Table 4. Courses related to vocational knowledge in music teaching undergraduate programme 2018

Course	Year	Term
Introduction to education	First	Fall
Education psychology	First	Fall
Educational sociology	First	Spring
Educational philosophy	First	Spring
Turkish education history	Second	Fall
Teaching principles and methods	Second	Fall
Elective course1	Second	Fall
Instructional technologies	Second	Spring
Research methods in education	Second	Spring
Elective course 2	Second	Spring
Turkish education system and school management	Third	Fall
Measurement and evaluation in education	Third	Fall
Elective course 3	Third	Fall
Ethics and ethics in education	Third	Spring
Classroom management	Third	Spring
Elective course 4	Third	Spring
Teaching practice 1	Fourth	Fall
Guidance in schools	Fourth	Fall
Elective course 5	Fourth	Fall
Teaching practice 2	Fourth	Spring
Special education and inclusion	Fourth	Spring
Elective course 6	Fourth	Spring

When the vocational knowledge courses of the music teaching undergraduate programme implemented by the Higher Education Council (HEC) in 2018 are taken into consideration, the number of pedagogical courses for education has increased and the students have been provided with the opportunity to choose different courses in terms of vocational knowledge, starting from the second grade under the elective course. Along with the courses seen in Table 4, the students are included in the package of courses from different areas such as Vocational Electives, Open and Distance Learning, Child Psychology, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder, Education Law, Educational Anthropology, Education History, Drama in Education, Extracurricular Activities in Education, Programme Development in Education, Project Preparation in Education, Critical and Analytical Thinking, Education of Hospitalised Children, Inclusive Education, Character and Value Education, Comparative Education, Micro-teaching, Museum Education, Out-of-School Learning Environments, Individualisation and Adaptation of Education, Sustainable Development and Education, Adult Education and Lifelong Learning. It is seen that the general approaches in preschool music education course, which is included in the programme implemented between 2007 and 2017, are not included in the 2018 curriculum.

There is an elective course in the programme under a preschool music education course. The definition of this course made by the Council of Higher Education includes the following objectives: the musical development characteristics of preschool period and children in the music teaching; the purpose and importance of preschool music education; the effects of preschool music education on social, emotional, motor, cognitive and language development and self-care skills of the child; the use of music activities in reaching the objectives and indicators of the preschool education programme; planning and implementation of music activities; methods and techniques to be used in preschool music education; and setting the environment in preschool period is determined as the content of the course (YOK, 2018).

There is a course called teaching principles and methods in the first semester of the second year in the music education undergraduate programme. This compulsory course is in the category of professional knowledge. The content of this course consists of several subjects such as basic concepts of teaching; teaching principles and methods; teaching–learning principles, models, strategies, methods, and techniques; setting goals and objectives in teaching; selection and organisation of content in teaching and learning; teaching materials; planning of instruction and teaching plans; theories and approaches related to education; success in teaching, learning and learning ineffective school; and assessment and evaluation.

In the undergraduate music teaching programme, no courses are focusing on teaching the piano and other instruments, which are required in both general music education and the preschool period. However, the subject's significance has been emphasised by several researchers in various studies in the literature.

3.3. Studies Related to Professional Development and Practical Experience of Teachers

When the literature is examined, it is seen that there are several studies on 'School Experience' course of prospective teachers in Turkey (Demircan, 2007; Gomleksiz et al., 2006; Harmandar et al., 2000; Kilinc & Godek Altuk, 2010; Kilinc & Salman, 2007), 'Teaching Practice' (Eraslan, 2009; Unver, 2003) or both courses (Becit et al., 2009; Guven, 2004; Sahin & Ozkilic, 2005; Ramazan & Yilmaz, 2017)

According to the results of the research conducted by Kasapoglu (2015), in which studies on school experience and teaching practice were examined between 2000 and 2010, the problems encountered in teaching practices are as follows: the deficiencies in providing effective guidance and school experience and teaching practice; the limitation of interaction between practice teachers and teacher candidates; the lack of cooperation between universities and practice schools; the perceived inadequacies of pre-service teachers with teaching practice; the problems encountered in the placement of pre-service teachers in practice schools; the difficulties of preparing for the practice and the practice in a limited time; the selection and placement of faculty coordinators and practice instructors; the lack or absence of the system; limitation or absence of opportunities offered in public schools; and the school experience and teaching practice of people related to teaching practice. They do not take the practice seriously and the practice teachers are not aware of the aims and content of the activities for the acquisition of school experience (Akgul et al., 2020).

Similarly, in the research conducted with instructors, teachers and preschool teacher candidates, by Secer et al. (2010) on the problems and solution suggestions in preschool teaching school practices, similar results are seen such as the practice teachers' not knowing the school experience course content, the lack of cooperation between the school they continue to practice and the university, and transportation difficulties. In the current study, unlike this study, it is seen that undergraduate courses

remain theoretical, pre-service teachers are from other institutions, lack of classroom management skills, teachers' intervention during the activity, other adults in the classroom, gender-based mocking and the intensity of pre-service teaching practice (Akgul et al., 2020).

In the study of Degirmencay and Kasap (2013), it was concluded that the guidelines prepared for the faculty on how the undergraduate students should practice and apply teaching are insufficient. According to Yildirim et al. (2019), one of the problems stemming from the faculty is the communication problems experienced with the advisor appointed during pre-service teaching practice process. They stated that the lecturers who received the reports did not help and support the candidates sufficiently during the process, and in this case, they had a communication problems. However, the piano and teaching lesson, which was applied in the spring semester of the fourth grade, which is a course for instrument education and instrument teaching in the field of art education in 2006, is not included in the 2018 curriculum (Yucetoker, 2019).

There are several national and international studies on the training of teachers, who are the building blocks of education, and on increasing their qualifications, and solutions are sought for the problems identified with the studies on teacher training in Turkey (Becit, Kurt, & Kabakçı, 2009; Elmore, 2007; Mau, 1997; Oğuz, , 2004; Santoro, 1997; Ramazan, Yılmaz 2017). After many years of efforts to train qualified teachers in Turkey, the "National Education Development Project" was initiated in 1994 with the cooperation of Higher Education Council (YÖK) and the World Bank in order to increase the quality of teacher education. In this project, the conditions for the development of a higher quality teacher profile were discussed. As a result of these discussions, it was determined that Turkish teacher candidates are sufficient in terms of content knowledge, but lacking in skills and knowledge related to teaching experience (Harmandar et al., 2000; Ramazan, Yılmaz, 2017). When the literature in Turkey is examined, it has been observed that there are few studies on instrument teaching practices, instrument pedagogy and the determination of teacher candidates' instrument teaching experience and competencies in the field of music teaching in particular.

Isikdemir (2019) concluded that due to the interviews with piano instructors, most of the instructors did not have information about the teaching methods used in primary music education or did not use the teaching methods existing in their teaching activities. He also stated that educators tried to teach by applying different teaching styles with their efforts.

Ersoy (2010) found that most piano teachers were new to the profession and did not receive any training in piano teaching methods. Furthermore, it has been stated that most piano teachers do not have any training in 6-year-old piano education but taught this age group. Therefore, he concluded that the teachers who teach piano to 6-year-old children do not have adequate knowledge about piano teaching methods. For this reason, he suggested that teachers should be informed about the techniques used in piano education and early music education of 6-year-old children and that they should be taught early piano lessons in the areas where teachers were trained, or teachers should attend in-service training on this subject. The understanding of in-service training is seriously addressed in schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education and in some private institutions. Similarly, it can be made compulsory for teachers working in private music education institutions to attend these seminars by organising in-region seminars on early piano education

4. Discussion

The basis of a teacher training programme is the principle that the teacher should be cultured and knowledgeable in his profession and field, or that teacher candidates should gain teacher behaviours

that lead to behavioural changes in students (Ozyurek, 2008). It is seen that the generally adopted situation in teacher training is to provide the teacher candidate with field and professional knowledge, general culture and teaching skills. In addition, it is necessary to provide pre-service teachers with a lot of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in the pre-service education process. At the beginning of these are field knowledge, general culture and the use of knowledge, skills and technology necessary to be a teacher (Okcabol, 2005). This is because these qualities are necessary criteria for teachers to better prepare the individuals they are responsible for raising for the future (Yesilyurt, 2011).

It is significant to start piano education at an early age. The aim of the piano lesson is to enable the child to play by enjoying the lesson. The piano teacher should help children's physical, personal, social and psychological development as well as ensure their success (Alpiner, 1952; Collins, 1996; Guven et al., 2012; Kaesler, 2002). For the piano educator, the method to be followed while teaching the piano lesson is as important as the age of the child. The age of starting piano education is ideally 6–7 years, when the child will show maturity and development. Uszler et al. (2000) state that the starting age for piano education in preschool age is between 4 and 6 years old. These age limits are also accepted by the authors of preschool piano methods (Barden et al., 1999; Bastien, 1995). However, due to the individual differences of children, age limits may be in earlier years. If the lesson duration is more than 15–20 minutes with a 5–6-year-old child, they may be distracted and bored with the lesson. At this point, the age and ability of the child play an important role. In this respect, the piano teacher should have the competence to attract the attention of the early piano student and enable them to focus on the lesson (Gultek, 2010; Guven et al., 2012).

When the studies in the literature on the subject and the course content of the music teaching undergraduate programme (YOK, 2018) are examined, it is observed that the courses on the teaching methods of the instrument for both the advanced age and the preschool period are not sufficiently included in the institutions providing vocational arts education and in the MEDs (Akgul, 2021). In addition, studies have shown that educators feel inadequate regarding this issue (Ersoy, 2010; Isikdemir, 2019). In the music teaching undergraduate programme, there is no course for the teaching of the piano instrument and other instruments in general, in both general music education and the preschool period (YOK, 2018), and the teachers who take piano lessons do not have advanced technical equipment and do not have advanced knowledge about contemporary piano teaching methods. Piano instructors need to be knowledgeable about piano pedagogy, have an educator personality and constantly renew themselves (Ozkan, 2020) in order to be able to contribute to the developmental areas of children.

The most important feature distinguishing a piano teacher from a soloist pianist is that a piano teacher has a teaching formation beside her professional knowledge and skills. He/she must transfer her knowledge to the students by using this formation most effectively. The teacher, whose task is not limited to transferring knowledge, has the most influential role in forming students' defensive thinking and world views. The personal development of the student and their success in the field of education are closely related to the teacher's success (Omur, 1998). A piano teacher should continuously improve their ability to play the instrument throughout their professional life and show the students that playing an instrument is a discipline that must be constantly studied by presenting/themselves as role models to the students.

Students with weak music education adopt the learning process of a difficult instrument such as the piano more difficultly because their musical development is not sufficient. 'Learning an instrument with universal techniques takes a long and difficult process'. 'For any instrument, it should not be expected to carry out a performance that can be carried to the universal art platform with a short

training, starting from the age of eighteen' (Kivrak, 2003). During the 4-year university education, the required time for teaching music is not enough. Frequent changes in education programmes and the number of taught works are also far from the level they should be. It is not possible to build professional skills and skills in piano education without considering these elements. The student cannot reach the necessary experience by learning the deciphering, integrity and artistic meaning of the works, and the piano works he played during the semester (Ozkan, 2020). He will have insufficient knowledge for instrument teaching in his professional life.

The demand in piano education is at a high level in our country. For this reason, the need for piano trainers in private education institutions and courses that provide music education for amateurs is increasing. In the first year of the music teaching undergraduate programme, piano lessons are compulsory for all teacher candidates during the first two semesters (Yucetoker, 2019). In the following years, teacher candidates can consider this course as an elective (Akgul, 2021; Yucetoker, 2019). These lessons increase the mastery of the instrument with the performance of the teacher candidate. The main objective is to show a development in this direction. There is no course on how to teach piano lessons to music teacher candidates during their undergraduate education (YOK, 2018). The development in this area is limited by the pre-service teacher's own interest and the knowledge he has gained from the academicians he has taken piano lessons from. For all ages, especially for the beginner level, which is the most important stage of piano education, the lack of information about piano beginner education approaches and the absence of a lesson about it cause pre-service teachers to close their development in this direction with their own efforts.

5. Conclusion

A teacher is a person who develops himself; conveys information in the best way; and educates, guides and supports his students, taking into account the characteristics of the culture he lives in and the requirements of the age in which he lives. In addition to the task of giving information, teachers are individuals who are effective in their development as a model for students with their attitudes, emotional reactions and various habits (Zembat, 2014). For these reasons, teachers should go through appropriate educational processes to gain these qualifications, which are the requirements of the profession. Today, with the rapid change in every field, the responsibilities of educational institutions and teachers are increasing, and this requires educators to be more qualified. The most important step for educators to be qualified is the training of teachers (Demircioglu, 2010). School experience and teaching practice courses, which are indispensable for transferring theoretical knowledge into practice, enable pre-service teachers to have an idea about the situations they may encounter before starting their profession (Ramazan & Yilmaz, 2017).

The general approach to learning an instrument is through individual lessons with the student's teacher. In these lessons, the teacher sets a model for the student, gives him assignments and expects him to overcome certain difficulties by fulfilling the tasks given during his individual work. In instrument education, the teacher guides the student. He expects the student to achieve his development and success in the instrument, thanks to the effectiveness of his individual work (Ozmentes, 2007).

However, considering that in general individual instrument lessons, the student and the teacher meet once or twice a week and the student organises the entire study process himself/herself, the student's being able to use the findings obtained from all these studies by himself, in other words, the student's own study situation can be controlled, allowing the continuity of success (Bilen, 2007).

There is a high demand for learning instruments in Turkey (Akgul, 2021; Imik & Donmez, 2017). Music teachers can give instrument lessons within the scope of both general music education and amateur music education. It is necessary to know the methods and techniques used in preschool and adult piano education regarding these lessons. In addition, it is important to be aware of the vast music literature and work accumulation. Music teaching undergraduate programmes, which focus on general music education, do not contain content for the teaching methods and techniques of these courses, although they apply instrument training intensively (Ersoy, 2010; Isikdemir, 2019) while music teachers progress in their own instruments, they do not see a lesson about instrument teaching methods, which is a part of their profession.

6. Recommendations

1. Preschool education has an important place in music education in today's country and the world. Therefore, instrument teaching methods and techniques courses should be given for this period in music teaching undergraduate programmes.
2. These courses should be taught by academicians who have a good command of the instrument specialised in pedagogy and formation.
3. In addition to the piano courses in the music teaching undergraduate programme, a course on piano teaching methods should be included in the curriculum. These courses can be included in the programme as compulsory or elective courses.
4. Preschool piano education, which will be given in piano teaching methods, should be taught in a separate subject or throughout the semester.
5. It should be ensured that the pedagogical formation lessons given in the departments of music teaching in education faculties are more associated with music and that these lessons are given by educators from the field of music.
6. More field research should be carried out regarding the subject area, and, in addition, the deficiencies of teachers delivering piano teaching methods courses for both preschool and other age groups should be determined, and they should be allowed to develop their skills via various seminars.

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