

*Full Length Research Paper*

# Students and instructors opinions about piano instruction\*

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This study examined the opinions of the students and piano instructors in the Turkish Education Faculties' Fine Arts Instruction Departments' music instruction programs about piano instruction. The study data were collected using a questionnaire administered to the piano instructors and the students who took lessons from them. The study results indicated that the piano lesson should be included in the whole undergraduate process to achieve the target behaviors. Regarding the content of piano lessons, the piano instructors emphasized that the lesson content should be increased to improve piano playing skills, develop deciphering, teach technical and musical skills, improve its usability in the teaching profession, impart a broader piano instruction, and teach students about the piano repertoire of all periods in history. The study found that the instructors and students also emphasized the importance of a piece's harmonic structure, tonality, and tonal context as well as its form, sentences, divisions, and musical language regarding the improvement of technique and musicality when studying musical works (for example, etudes, sonatinas and sonatas). Another study finding showed that the most difficult lessons, according to the instructors and students, were chord clusters with three and four consecutive notes, using two techniques with two hands (for example, legato with one hand and staccato with the other) and finger numbers.

**Key words:** Music instruction, music instructor, piano instruction, piano instructor.

## INTRODUCTION

Education plays a major role in directing and advancing societies. Based on the description of the term "education," music instruction is described as "teaching individuals particular musical behaviors through their own experiences in a purposeful and methodical way, or individuals' process of changing, transforming and improving musical behaviors through their own experiences in a purposeful and methodical way" (Uçan,

1994). In music instruction, pre-service music teachers learn how to distinguish musical sounds and how to hear them in ear training, how to use their voices in the most effective and accurate way in voice training, and learn about their instruments in addition to the necessary playing skills in instrument training.

Instrument training requires students to work carefully and in a planned and disciplined way, and make

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sacrifices. It is important to convey the discipline and patience necessary to play an instrument as part of instrument instruction so that students proceed with the correct technique (Çilden, 2003). Instrument training is one of the most essential and meaningful dimensions of music instruction at all levels, whether general, amateur or for professional purposes. Instrument training is an essential part of both general and professional music training, and it has different functions in music instruction. These functions are enriching and complementary dimensions (Uçan, 1993). Instrument training enables individuals to play their instruments more effectively, favorably and correctly.

Piano instruction, a part of instrument instruction, has an important place in institutions that train music teachers. With piano instruction, individuals improve themselves by learning about deciphering, musical hearing, harmony and form, some of the most important elements of music. Piano is both a solo and an accompaniment instrument. Thus, piano is both an area of study and an effective teaching tool as it can be used as an accompanying instrument as well as polyphonically, and also has a large literature (Yazıcı, 2013).

The content of the piano course consists of "technical exercises and studying, examples of works from Turkish and global composers, examples of instructional music, piano literature, and teaching and learning techniques in school music" (YOK, 1998). Piano education-one of the parts of instrument education in the institutions training music lecturers-has a significant place. Piano course is a compulsory lesson which is taken in both terms of first three years in the Faculties of Education, Department of Fine Arts Education, Department of Music Education. In addition, with the new revised program, piano course will be provided during the whole undergraduate program, in other words for four years. Piano is one of the major and indispensable instruments of music instructors thanks to both the broadness of its sound structure and ability to be used in different musical fields, as well as its importance in listening and understanding music, teaching playing skills and improving polyphony. Piano is an important instrument in training music teachers. Pre-service music teachers should be able to play the piano effectively in their future professional lives (Kutluk, 2001).

Pre-service music teachers will have learned the piano-playing skills required by music instruction both during their own education and in their future teaching process. Thus, piano is an effective teaching tool in institutions that train music teachers (Bayraktar, 1989). In the institutions training music teachers, though, the primary goal of piano instruction is to improve students' piano-playing skills, which indicates that piano instructors have the greatest responsibility to help students learn and gain experience about what methods to use in their individual practices and how to use them (Babacan, 2014). In this respect, the instructors who train music teachers are supposed to have a deep understanding that will help

them tirelessly guide their students with meaningful, realistic and creative activities based on musical principles (Elgersma, 2012). The piano-playing skills that should be taught to individuals in piano instruction are supposed to include both technical and musical development.

*Even an instrumental work with the smallest dimension includes the same musical elements and artistic ideas found in great works. Thus, introducing students to the concepts and expression of the art of music will be the key that enriches their musical experiences and transforms difficult skills, like typing the music notes read to them, into an enjoyable artistic activity (Montparker, 1998).*

In this context, this study is important since it will demonstrate students' and instructors' opinions about piano instruction. Since this study includes subjects focusing on both piano lessons' duration and content determined by the curriculum and strengthening students' technique and musicality when studying different works, it will contribute to upcoming generations by putting forward students' opinions about the piano studies they have more difficulty with. In this respect, this study will present both students' and piano instructors' opinions in a comparative manner.

## METHODOLOGY

### Study design

This study aimed to receive teachers' and students' opinions about piano education. In this framework, the dependent variable of the study is teachers' and students' opinions about piano education. Their opinions about piano education were analyzed in context of the study content. Study design is the arrangement of conditions required for the collection of the data that fit the purpose of the study as well as for their analysis. This is a survey that aims to describe "Students' and instructors' opinions about piano instruction" as well as the current situation. In other words, this study is based on the model that determines the current situation (Karasar, 2005).

### The population and sample of the study

The population of the study included the piano instructors and their students in the Turkish Education Faculties' Fine Arts Instruction Departments' music instruction programs. Sample of the research consists of the piano (course) lecturers (n=14), who were lecturing in 2006 to 2007 school year and selected from the Faculties of Education, Department of Fine Arts Education, Department of Music Education of Dokuz Eylul University, Balıkesir University and Atatürk University in Turkey and students (n=142) taking these courses."

### Data collection tools

Student Questionnaire Including the Views of Students Towards Piano Course" and "Lecturer Questionnaire Including the Views

**Table 1.** The distribution of the students by their determination of the process length required for the piano lesson to teach target behaviors (n=142).

Variable	f	Percentage
2 years	2	1.4
3 years	18	12.6
4 years	98	69.0
Depends on the student (for example, on his or her hard work, ambition, talent)	8	5.6
The number of weekly lessons should be increased	16	1.2
Total	142	100.0

Towards Piano Course”, which were developed by the researcher, were used as the data collection tool in this research. Therefore, four separate questionnaires were administered to both piano lecturers and students to specify the views towards the piano education in this research. The same questions were asked to the piano lecturers and students. In this research, the following questions were asked to the piano lecturers and students:

1. What is the Required Process Length to Teach Target Behaviors in the Piano Lesson?
2. Does the Piano Lesson Have Sufficient Content?
3. What Is the Ranking by Importance of the Subjects That Focus on Strengthening Technique and Musicality in Music Pieces (e.g. Etudes, Sonatinas and Sonatas)?
4. What Is the Ranking by Importance of Piano Studies That Are More Difficult?

In this research, the questions developed by the researcher, including the opinions of both piano lecturers and students were open-ended questions and question types with regard to rating. The first and second questions included open-ended questions while the third and fourth questions included questions with regard to rating. Blanks were left under the open-ended questions for their answers. To answer the questions with regard to rating, the participants were asked to note the options in order of importance.

The researcher consulted the experts about the questions before conducting the validity study. Based on the expert opinions, the researcher made the necessary revision and finalized the questions about opinions. The students were asked to fill out the "student opinions about piano lesson" questionnaire in a piano lesson. The questions inquiring their opinions about piano lesson included open-ended questions as well as those focusing on rating. The researcher left blank spaces under the open-ended questions to be used for answers. For the questions focusing on rating, the students were asked to arrange the given choices by their importance level.

Piano instructors' opinions about these lessons were obtained as written statements. Then the researcher transcribed the verbal data and formed texts. The verbal data were analyzed using qualitative data analysis techniques. The responses given by the students and instructors were studies using content analysis, a qualitative analysis method. The encoding created by the content analysis was combined in specific categories and classified afterwards. Instructors' and students' responses to the open-ended questions about the piano lesson were categorized based on their meaning and the responses close in meaning were grouped together.

#### Data analysis techniques

The study data were analyzed using frequencies (f) and percentages (%), which are descriptive analysis methods. The

qualitative data consisted of the open-ended questions in the questionnaire. The researcher categorized, analyzed and tabulated the responses to these questions.

#### FINDINGS

The researcher analyzed instructors' and students' responses on the questionnaire forms. In the tables, the common responses by the students and instructors were marked with (\*).

#### What Is the Required Process Length to Teach Target Behaviors in the Piano Lesson?

The length of the process required to learn the target behaviors was determined based on the responses by the students and instructors to the questions, and given in Tables 1 and 2, respectively.

It is notable that students' and instructors' opinions about this issue are consistent. It was concluded that the piano lessons should be pursued throughout the entire undergraduate education process. Of 14 instructors in the study sample, 12 (85.7%) stated that students should take piano lessons for four years, and that it is the instrument they will use most in their future professional lives. It is notable that students' and instructors' opinions about this issue are consistent. Of 14 instructors, 12 (85.7%) stated that the piano lesson should be included in the entire education process, that is, for four years to teach the target behaviors.

#### Does the Piano Lesson Have Sufficient Content?

The students' and instructors' opinions about lesson content were presented in Tables 3 and 4, respectively. A majority of the students 101 (71.1%) said that the piano lesson had sufficient content. It was determined that the students who said the content of the lesson should be increased comprehended the necessity of this lesson and realized that the knowledge they learned in this lesson was important. Contrary to the students, 10 of 14 instructors (71.4%) said that the content of the piano lessons should be increased. Those who said that the

**Table 2.** The distribution of the instructors by their determination of the process length required for the piano lesson to teach target behaviors (n=14).

Process	f	Percentage
2 years	-	-
3 years	-	-
4 years	12	85.7
Depends on the student (for example, on his or her hard work, ambition, talent)	1	7.1
The number of weekly lessons should be increased	1	7.1
Total	14	100.0

**Table 3.** The distribution of students by their opinions about the sufficiency of the piano lesson (n=142).

Situation	f	Percentage
It is sufficient	101	71.1
It should be reduced	6	4.2
It should be increased	35	24.6
Total	142	100.0

**Table 4.** The distribution of the instructors by their opinions about the sufficiency of the piano lesson's content (n=14).

Situation	f	Percentage
It is sufficient	4	28.6
It should be reduced	-	-
It should be increased	10	71.4
Total	14	100.0

content was sufficient claimed that:

*They learned the necessary information  
It depended on students' regular work, level and ambition  
Piano was not their only lesson and they also take time for other lessons*

Those who said that the content should be increased claimed that:

*\*The lesson has few course hours and little content  
\*Its usability in the profession of teaching is important  
\*It is necessary to improve piano-playing skills (get to know more musical works)  
The more I improve during the piano lesson, the more it will influence the other music lessons, and I will strengthen my knowledge through broader learning.*

Those who said that the content should be increased put forward these reasons:

*There are necessary technical and musical skills to be*

*taught*

*\*Its usability in the profession of teaching is important  
\*It is necessary to improve piano-playing skills (get to know more musical works)  
It is necessary to have a broader education and get to know the piano repertoire of different periods in history  
\*The lesson has few course hours and little content  
The students should improve their deciphering skills, which did not depend on memorizing, to enable them play new musical works on their own*

It is an important point that the opinions of the students and instructors who thought that the content of the piano lesson should be increased were consistent with each other. Regarding the sufficiency of the piano lesson's content, 10 of 14 instructors (71.4%) said that the content should be increased.

**What is the ranking by importance of the subjects that focus on strengthening technique and musicality in music pieces (for example, etudes, sonatinas and sonatas)?**

Students and instructors arranged by importance the subjects that focus on strengthening technique and musicality in music pieces (for example, etudes, sonatinas and sonatas), and their responses were classified and presented in Tables 5 and 6, respectively.

As presented in Table 5, rank 1 indicates little importance while rank 8 indicates great importance in ranking technique and musicality subjects. In this section, 142 students ranked the importance of technique and musicality subjects in studying the music pieces assigned to them. The mean for each content piece was calculated by summing the given numbers and dividing the answer by the number of students. The smallest mean shows the highest level of importance. Based on this determination, the ranking of technique and musicality subjects by importance showed that the harmonic structure of the piece was at the eighth level (very important), the tonality of the piece and the tonalities it is included in was at the seventh level, the form and sentences of the piece was at the sixth level, the musical language of the piece was at the fifth level, musical expressions on the piece written by

**Table 5.** The distribution by importance of technique and musicality subjects according to the students (n=142).

Content	$\Sigma x$	$142/\Sigma x$
The period when the piece was composed	429	0.33
Background information about the composer	390	0.36
The tonality of the piece; the tonalities it is included in	813	0.17
Inhalation (breathing physically)	460	0.30
Harmonic structure of the piece	839	0.16
Form, sentences and divisions of the piece	756	0.18
Musical expressions written on the piece by the composer	701	0.20
Musical language of the piece (tonal, modal or atonal)	727	0.19

\* $\Sigma x$ : Total ranking of technique and musicality subjects by importance in studying music pieces.

**Table 6.** The distribution of technique and musicality subjects by importance according to the instructors (n=14).

Content	$\Sigma x$	$14/\Sigma x$
The period when the piece was composed	40	0.35
Background information about the composer	29	0.48
The tonality of the piece; the tonalities it is included in	94	0.148
Inhalation (breathing physically)	23	0.60
Harmonic structure of the piece	95	0.147
Form, sentences and divisions of the piece	85	0.16
Musical expressions written on the piece by the composer	64	0.21
Musical language of the piece (tonal, modal or atonal)	74	0.18

\*  $\Sigma x$ : Total ranking of technique and musicality subjects by importance in studying music pieces.

the composer was at the fourth level, inhalation (breathing physically) was at the third level, musical period of the piece was at the second level and background information about the composer was at the first level (little importance).

As presented in Table 6, rank 1 indicates little importance while rank 8 indicates great importance in ranking technique and musicality subjects in studying music pieces. In this section, 14 instructors ranked the importance of technique and musicality subjects in studying music pieces assigned to them. The mean for each content piece was calculated by summing the given numbers and dividing the answer by the number of instructors. The smallest mean shows the highest level of importance. Based on this determination, the ranking of technique and musicality subjects by importance showed that the harmonic structure of the piece was at the eighth level (very important), the tonality of the piece and the tonalities it was included in was at the seventh level, the form and sentences of the piece was at the sixth level, the musical language of the piece was at the fifth level, musical expressions written on the piece by the composer was at the fourth level, musical period of the

piece was at the third level, background information about the piece was at the second level and inhalation (breathing physically) was at the first level (little importance).

### What Is the Ranking by Importance of Piano Studies That Are More Difficult?

The responses by the students and instructors were classified and presented in Tables 7 and 8, respectively. As seen in Table 7, 1 indicates little importance and 9 indicates great importance in the ranking of the piano studies that students found difficult. In this section, 142 students ranked the content of the piano studies they found difficult from 1 to 9. The mean for each content piece was calculated by summing the given numbers and dividing the answer by the number of students. The smallest mean shows the highest level of importance. Based on this determination, the ranking by importance of piano practices that students found difficult showed that consecutive chord clusters including three and four chords was at the ninth level (very important), using two

**Table 7.** The distribution by importance of piano practices that students found difficult, according to the students \* (n=142).

<b>Content</b>	<b><math>\Sigma x</math></b>	<b><math>142/\Sigma x</math></b>
Difficulties related to finger numbers	757	0.18
Playing the passages including small values (16 or 32 notes) at fast beat	722	0.19
Pedal use	434	0.32
Being able to play the piece at its own unique beat	680	0.21
Using two different techniques with two hands (e.g. legato with one hand and staccato with the other)	902	0.16
Rolled chords (arpeggios)	702	0.20
Gamuts	622	0.23
Cadences	647	0.22
Consecutive chord clusters including three and four chords	923	0.15

\*  $\Sigma x$ : The total ranking of the piano studies that students have difficulty with by their importance.

**Table 8.** The distribution by importance of piano practices that students found difficult, according to the instructors \*(n=14).

<b>Content</b>	<b><math>\Sigma x</math></b>	<b><math>14/\Sigma x</math></b>
Difficulties related to finger numbers	68	0.205
Playing the passages including small values (16 or 32 notes) at fast beat	69	0.202
Pedal use	41	0.34
Being able to play the piece at its own unique beat	92	0.152
Using two techniques with two hands (e.g. legato with one hand and staccato with the other)	93	0.150
Rolled chords (arpeggios)	74	0.18
Gamuts	70	0.2
Cadences	41	0.34
Consecutive chord clusters including three and four chords	82	0.17

\*  $\Sigma x$ : The total ranking of the piano studies that students have difficulty with by their importance.

techniques with two hands (e.g. legato with one hand and staccato with the other) was at the eighth level, difficulties related to finger numbers were at the seventh level, playing passages with small values (16 or 32 notes) at high beat was at the sixth level, rolled chords (arpeggios) were at the fifth level, playing a piece at its own beat was at the fourth level, cadences were at the third level, gamuts were at the second level and pedal use was at the first level (little importance).

As seen in Table 8, 1 indicates small importance and 9 indicates great importance in the ranking of the piano studies that students found difficult. In this section, 14 instructors ranked the difficult piano studies by importance from 1 to 9.

The mean for each content piece was calculated by summing up the given numbers and dividing the answer by the number of instructors. The smallest mean shows the highest level of importance. Based on this determination, the ranking of the piano studies by importance indicated that using two techniques with two hands (for example, legato with one hand and staccato

with the other) was at the ninth level (very important), playing the piece at its own beat was at the eighth level, consecutive chord clusters including three and four chords were at the seventh level, rolled chords (arpeggios) were at the sixth level, gamuts were at the fifth level, playing the passages with small values (16 or 32 notes) at fast beats was at the fourth level, difficulties related to finger numbers were at the third level, cadences were at the second level, and pedal use was at the first level (little importance).

### **The period required for the piano lesson to teach target behaviors**

The researcher asked the students, "How much time is required for the piano lesson to teach target behaviors?" The most common response to this question by the students was four years (n=98). The most common response of the piano instructors (n=14) was also four years (n=12). The study results showed that both

students and piano instructors suggested that students take piano lesson for all four years of their music teaching education. They also claimed that long-term study will help learn students learn piano practices that they found difficult.

### Content of the piano lesson

Students' answers regarding the context of piano course, which are located at the top, are the expressions of 'sufficient' (n=101) and 'should be increased' (n=35). The researcher posed the same question to the piano instructors (n=14) as well. The instructors' most common responses were "It should be increased" (n=10), and "It is sufficient" (n=4). It was found that the explanations of students and piano instructors were different from each other. When stating that the content of the piano lesson was sufficient, a majority of students said that:

*They learned the necessary information  
It depended on students' regular work, level and ambition  
The piano lesson was not their only lesson, and they needed to have time for other lessons, too.*

The students and instructors claiming that the content of the piano lesson should be increased said that was because:

*\*The lesson had little content and few hours  
\*Its usability in the teaching profession was important  
\*They needed to improve their piano-playing skills (and learn about more music pieces)  
\*The more they improved their piano skills, the more this would influence their achievement in other lessons, and help them strengthen their knowledge through broader learning*

In fact, the increase in the duration of piano lessons should be consistent with the content of the lesson. On the other hand, the lesson subjects will be intense and complicated. The increase in content and weekly hours of the piano lesson will teach the subjects in a longer timeframe and enable students to learn more comprehensively.

### The ranking by importance of subjects that strengthen technique and musicality

Below are the optional answers to the question "Rank by importance the subjects aimed at strengthening technique and musicality."

*The period when the piece was composed  
Background information about the composer  
The tonality of the piece; the tonalities it is included in  
Inhalation (breathing physically)  
Harmonic structure of the piece*

*Form, sentences and divisions of the piece  
Musical expressions written on the piece by the composer  
Musical language of the piece (tonal, modal and atonal)*

The subjects given higher ranks by the students were: Harmonic structure of the piece, tonality of the piece, the tonalities it is included in, the form and sentences as well as the divisions of the piece, and the musical language of the piece. The ranking made by the instructors was: Harmonic structure of the piece, tonality of the piece, the tonalities it is included in, the form and sentences as well as the divisions of the piece, and the musical language of the piece. It was found that the responses of the students and instructors were consistent with each other.

### The ranking by importance of piano studies students found difficult

Below are the optional answers to the question, "Rank by importance the piano studies that you found difficult".

*Difficulties related to finger numbers  
Playing the passages including small values (16 or 32 notes) at high beat  
Pedal use  
Being able to play the piece in its own unique beat  
Using two techniques with two hands (e.g. legato with one hand and staccato with the other)  
Rolled chords (arpeggios)  
Gamuts  
Cadences  
Consecutive chord clusters including three and four chords*

The students ranked by importance the piano studies they found difficult: Consecutive chord clusters including three and four notes, using two techniques with two hands (for examples, legato with one hand and staccato with the other), and the difficulties related to finger numbers. The researcher posed the same question to the piano instructors. The subjects that instructors placed in higher ranks were using two techniques with two hands (for examples, legato with one hand and staccato with the other), playing a music piece at its own beat, consecutive chord clusters including three and four notes, rolled chords (arpeggios) and gamuts.

However, the instructors thought that the difficulties related to finger numbers should rank third. In other words, the instructors believed this subjects was the third most important one. To conclude, the students, in contrast with the instructors, stated that they had difficulty in using two techniques with two hands (for examples, legato with one hand and staccato with the other), playing the piece at its own beat, and consecutive chord clusters including three and four notes more than with finger numbers.

## DISCUSSION

As indicated by the survey results, the piano lesson is an essential part of the music teaching program, which makes student and instructor opinions about the lesson very important. It was found that both students and their instructors believe the piano lesson should be maintained throughout the years of undergraduate education to increase the lessons' productivity and better achieve their goals. A relevant study found that piano is an effective teaching tool in the institutions that train music teachers, and that it has an important role in music teachers' professional lives (Kivrak, 2003). Kutluk (2001) determined that it was necessary for piano instruction to be maintained throughout the education process. Aydiner-Uygun (2012) stated that one of the most fundamental lessons for pre-service music teachers was piano, and that this instruction was important for their professional lives. These findings supported the results of this study.

Regarding the content of the piano lesson, explanations by piano instructors and their students were found to differ. In fact, the duration of piano lessons should be consistent with the content of the lesson. On the other hand, the lesson subjects will be intense and complicated. Increasing the content and weekly hours of the piano lesson will help teach the subjects in a longer timeframe and enable students to learn more comprehensively. A relevant study focused on the necessity of teaching the piano subjects in longer timeframes to make students use the piano, an effective teaching tool in the institutions that train music teachers, in their professional lives (Bayraktar, 1989). This finding is consistent with the results of this study.

Another finding of the study revealed the ranking by importance of the subjects aimed at strengthening technique and musicality when studying music pieces (for examples, etudes, sonatinas and sonatas) by their importance. The ranking was: Harmonic structure of the piece, tonality of the piece, the tonalities it is included in, the form and sentences as well as divisions of the piece, and the musical language of the piece. The ranking made by the instructors was: Harmonic structure of the piece, tonality of the piece, the tonalities it is included in, the form and sentences of the piece, and the musical language of the piece. It was found that the responses of the students and instructors were consistent with each other. A relevant study stated that the piano technique that students learn is a key to musical expression and a tool for interpretation (Fink, 1992). Another study, which focused on supporting both technical and musical development of students, claimed that a good piano instructor should teach more than how to move fingers (Lyke and Enoch, 1987).

Cantu (2001) stressed the importance of musical expression and musicality for students in understanding and perceiving music, and in reading musical writings correctly. Another study emphasizes the goal of piano

instruction, which is the foundation of music education and plays an important part in instrument training, as well as the necessity of students to use their instruments effectively and productively in their social and professional lives. In addition, that study states that piano instruction should not be limited to teaching students only the technique of playing the piano (Yazıcı, 2013). These findings supported the results of this study.

Another finding of this study revealed the ranking by the students of the piano studies they found difficult: Consecutive chord clusters including three and four notes, using two techniques with two hands (for examples, legato with one hand and staccato with the other), and difficulties related to finger numbers. The researcher posed the same question to the instructors. The subjects that instructors placed in higher ranks were using two techniques with two hands (for examples, legato with one hand and staccato with the other), playing a music piece at its own beat, consecutive chord clusters including three and four notes, rolled chords (arpeggios) and gamuts. Thus, their responses included different technical exercises in addition to finger exercises. Piano instructors should assign technical exercises and music pieces suitable for students' levels of expertise. They should also strive to find instructional methods that fit students' levels (Taviloğlu, 2005). Gasımova (2010) said that technical knowledge was obligatory to convey the content of a music piece, and stressed that it was necessary to consider students' individual differences when trying to improve their technical skills. The research conducted by Ko-Kyung (2005) supports the findings of this study, and claims that students should improve themselves both mentally and physically. That study also stressed that students had different individual characteristics, and piano instructors needed to take these differences into consideration. The study also emphasized that the methods selected by the piano instructor should improve students' note-reading skills and piano technique. Edwards (2014) focused on the importance of piano instructors' selecting materials suitable for students' achievement levels. These findings are consistent with the results of this study.

## SUGGESTIONS

Based on the study findings, the researcher would like to make certain suggestions to program developers, institutions that train music teachers, music instructors and researchers who study in this area.

1. The piano lesson should be maintained throughout the years of undergraduate education since it will enable more comprehensive learning if piano subjects are taught in a longer timeframe.
2. It is also necessary to include certain practices that improves musicality in piano lessons in addition to technical studies to develop piano-playing skills.

3. Piano instructors should encourage both students' musical creativity and musical thinking skills, and their planned studies by assigning homework.
4. It is necessary to inform students about the period and style of a music piece when teaching it to enable students to suitably interpret core aspects of the piece.
5. The piano curricula in music teaching departments should aim to teach qualities that will contribute to other music lessons. This curricula should be simultaneous with the curricula of other music lessons associated with it.
6. As in all fields of education, instrument training, particularly piano training, requires that instructors develop methods suitable for students' individual characteristics, and select methods that fit their level.
7. Piano instruction should be given as a whole that includes fundamental behaviors to be improved both technically and musically.
8. Piano lessons should include studies of how to use the piano more effectively and productively in line with the necessities of music instruction.

### Conflict of Interests

The author have not declared any conflict of interests.

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