

# A Comparative Study of Music Curriculum Standards in China and South Korea: Policy Development and Educational Strategies

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** This study aims to analyze and compare the latest compulsory education music curriculum standards in China and South Korea, exploring the different strategies employed in music education and their impacts. The Chinese "Compulsory Education Art Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition)" adopt a comprehensive art education framework, emphasizing the cultivation of aesthetic literacy, the inheritance of outstanding traditional Chinese culture, and interdisciplinary integration to enhance students' musical literacy, aesthetic appreciation, and cultural identity. The South Korean "2022 Music Curriculum" focus on developing "creative and integrative talents," highlighting the role of music education in fostering students' creativity, social adaptability, and cultural understanding. The curriculum content encompasses four core competencies: aesthetic experience, music creation, social communication, and cultural comprehension, incorporating interdisciplinary teaching methods, digital music technology, and modern popular music to broaden the scope of music education.

**Methodology:** This study employs Bereday's Comparative Education Four-Step Method to systematically analyze the policy objectives, curriculum framework, learning goals and core concepts of the two countries' music curriculum standards. Literature analysis and policy text comparison are used to summarize the similarities and differences between the two standards.

**Findings:** The study reveals that China places greater emphasis on integrating music education with cultural heritage and aesthetic experience, while South Korea focuses more on aligning music education with modern technology, industry demands, and globalized arts education. Moreover, significant differences exist in curriculum implementation models, teaching methods, and evaluation systems between the two countries.

**Practical Implications:** The findings provide valuable insights for optimizing future music education policies and practices in China and South Korea. This comparative analysis not only deepens the understanding of the music education models in both countries but also offers theoretical and practical implications for future curriculum reforms, fostering international collaboration in arts education.

**value:** This study offers a novel contribution by comparing and analyzing the music curriculum standards of China and South Korea, highlighting their distinct educational philosophies, strategies, and implementation methods. The research provides a solid foundation for further refinement and improvement of music education policies in these two countries.

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## 1. Introduction

With the advancement of globalization and educational reform, the importance of arts education in fostering students' holistic competencies and innovative abilities has become increasingly [1] prominent. In the field of music education, national education systems continuously revise and optimize curriculum standards to meet societal demands and support students' individualized development. Music education not only plays a crucial role in cultivating students' aesthetic appreciation, creative thinking, and cultural identity but also constitutes a significant component of national education policies. In recent years, both China and South Korea have undergone multiple reforms in their music curriculum standards at the primary and secondary education levels, reflecting their distinct educational philosophies, policy orientations, and curriculum implementation priorities.

Comparative studies [2] on curriculum standards in international music education research hold substantial value in understanding global trends in music education. However, systematic comparative studies specifically addressing the music curriculum standards of China and South Korea remain relatively scarce, particularly in terms of in-depth analysis of policy developments and educational strategies. Thus, this study aims to reveal the key characteristics of music curriculum reforms in both countries, offering theoretical insights for future curriculum optimization and international educational collaboration.

China's compulsory education music curriculum standards have undergone multiple revisions, evolving from the 2001 experimental edition to the 2011 version, and subsequently to the latest 2022 edition. These reforms progressively emphasize aesthetic education, the preservation of traditional Chinese culture, and interdisciplinary integration. The most recent standards further reinforce core competencies, practical applications, and the diversification of arts education to align with contemporary educational needs. The China's Art Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education [3] (2022 Edition) (hereinafter referred to as the 2022 Edition).

Similarly, South Korea has experienced significant developments in its music curriculum reform. From the 2007 curriculum [4] reform, which emphasized creative thinking, to the 2015 revision that introduced a core competency-oriented [5] approach, and finally to the 2022 edition, which integrates STEAM education, digital music technologies, and modern popular music (such as K-pop), the South Korean music curriculum standards increasingly focus on globalization, technological integration, and social engagement. South Korean "2022 Music Curriculum [6]" (hereinafter referred to as the 2022 Music Curriculum).

This study employs a comparative research methodology [7] by systematically reviewing and analyzing the latest 2022 policy documents released by both countries. The research specifically examines the curriculum standards outlined in these policies, with a particular focus on the core objectives and educational strategies of music education. By identifying similarities and differences in the music curriculum standards of China and South Korea, this study seeks to enhance understanding of their respective educational models and provide theoretical support for future policy optimization and international collaboration in arts education.

The objective of this study is to compare and analyze the latest music curriculum standards in China and South Korea, with a primary focus on how these standards and educational policies contribute to the advancement of arts education. Through an examination of curriculum objectives, framework structures, learning goals, and educational philosophies, this study aims to identify the differences and commonalities in the educational policies of both countries and assess their implications for music education practices.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

Comparative Education Theory, Comparative education provides a systematic framework for analyzing educational systems, policies, and curricula across different countries. Among the various methodologies in comparative education, Bereday's Comparative Education Four-Step Method [7] is widely recognized and frequently employed in cross-national curriculum analysis. George Z. F. Bereday (1920–1983), an American comparative education scholar, legal expert, and sociologist, introduced this method by integrating historical factor analysis with inductive reasoning and positivist thought. Bereday developed this method by critically inheriting and expanding upon the historical analysis approach of Nicholas Hans and the sociological perspectives of Robert Ulich. His approach consists of four sequential steps: description, interpretation, juxtaposition, and comparison, allowing for a structured and comprehensive examination of educational policies and curricula across different national contexts.

Bereday's method has been extensively applied in comparative studies of curriculum structures, educational objectives, and policy evaluations. For instance, Alizadeh and Habibi (2025) utilized Bereday's approach in their comparative study on parental involvement in education across the United States, Japan, and Iran, providing insights into cross-cultural variations in educational engagement (Alizadeh & Habibi, 2025) [8]. Similarly, Bakhshi and Sabzeh (2024) employed Bereday's framework to analyze the life skills education curricula in Iran, Finland, and Canada, highlighting differences in educational goals and pedagogical strategies (Bakhshi & Sabzeh, 2024) [9]. Given its effectiveness in comparative curriculum analysis, this study adopts Bereday's Comparative Education Four-Step Method to systematically examine the similarities and differences between the music curriculum standards of China and South Korea.

### 2.2 Existing Research on China's Music Curriculum Standards

The evolution of China's music curriculum standards in compulsory education has undergone multiple revisions, with the most recent iteration being the 2022 Compulsory Education Arts Curriculum Standards. The transition from the 2011 edition to the 2022 edition reflects a shift towards a more structured and refined approach to music education, emphasizing the development of students' musical literacy through a systematic framework.

Kang (2023) [10] conducted a comparative study of the 2011 and 2022 editions of China's compulsory education music curriculum standards, highlighting key transformations in course content and pedagogical orientation. The 2011 edition structured music education around four broad domains, adopting a macro-level perspective to cultivate students' aesthetic abilities. In contrast, the 2022 edition refines and classifies these domains, aligning them with the core competencies of aesthetic perception, artistic expression, creative practice, and cultural understanding. This refined framework ensures a more progressive and integrative approach to music education, fostering students' musical literacy in a structured manner.

The revised curriculum underscores the importance of music as an emotional and experiential art form, emphasizing perception as the foundation of musical learning. Basic music knowledge and technical skills are gradually introduced within this perceptual framework to enhance students' performance abilities. Once foundational skills are established, students are encouraged to apply creativity by drawing inspiration from daily life and integrating various musical techniques into creative practice. This process not only reinforces technical proficiency but also promotes the application of music in everyday contexts. Furthermore, the curriculum places significant emphasis on cultural diversity and global perspectives, encouraging students to

develop an appreciation for different musical traditions and understand the cultural contexts in which various music styles exist. Such an approach aligns with contemporary trends in multicultural music education and reflects the broader objectives of globalization and cultural exchange.

In addition to structural refinements, the 2022 edition adopts a comprehensive arts education framework that integrates aesthetic literacy, cultural heritage, and interdisciplinary learning. Prior research has examined the transition of China's music curriculum from a performance-oriented model to a more holistic approach, emphasizing the role of music education in fostering aesthetic appreciation and cultural identity. Scholars have also noted the increasing integration of traditional Chinese music into the curriculum, aligning with national policies that promote cultural confidence and heritage preservation. This evolution signifies a deliberate effort to balance global musical trends with the preservation of China's rich artistic traditions, thereby cultivating students' ability to engage with music both as an artistic discipline and a cultural expression.

Overall, existing studies [11] suggest that China's recent curriculum reforms reflect a strategic enhancement of music education's role in aesthetic development, creative engagement, and cultural understanding.

### **2.3 Existing Research on South Korea's Music Curriculum Standards**

South Korea's music curriculum has undergone significant transformations since its initial introduction in the 1950s, with a total of ten major revisions over the decades. Park (2023) [12] conducted a historical analysis of South Korea's music curriculum, examining its developmental trajectory and the underlying educational shifts that have shaped contemporary music education. This study provided a theoretical analysis of curriculum development processes, content design, and structural changes, identifying key trends and pedagogical innovations.

One of the most notable findings from Park's research is the paradigm shift in South Korea's music education. Initially, the curriculum was content-oriented, focusing primarily on musical knowledge and repertoire. However, over time, it evolved into a pedagogically driven model, emphasizing teaching methodologies and student engagement. Furthermore, the curriculum transitioned from a school-based learning approach to one that integrates real-life musical experiences and out-of-school competencies, reflecting broader educational reforms that emphasize applied learning. Another key transformation is the shift from knowledge transfer-based learning to a student-centered, diverse, and autonomous learning model, fostering creativity and independent musical exploration. Additionally, South Korea's curriculum development process has become more inclusive and participatory, incorporating feedback from multiple stakeholders, including educators, policymakers, and researchers.

### **2.4 Existing Research on South Korea's Music Curriculum Standards**

Despite increasing academic interest in cross-cultural music education, comparative research on the music curricula of China and South Korea remains relatively limited. While individual studies have explored the historical evolution and policy directions of each country's curriculum, systematic comparative analyses remain scarce. Existing studies, such as Rui (2015) [13], have examined multicultural elements in Chinese and Korean music education, but these analyses lack depth in addressing broader curriculum frameworks, policy objectives, instructional methodologies, and assessment systems.

### **3. Methodology and Procedures**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study employs a qualitative content analysis approach combined with policy document analysis to systematically and comprehensively compare the compulsory education music curriculum standards in China and South Korea. By synthesizing core educational philosophies, this research explores the similarities and differences in policy development and educational strategies between the two countries.

##### **3.1.1 Qualitative Content Analysis**

(1) Overview of the Method: Qualitative content analysis is a method that systematically examines textual data by coding and categorizing information to uncover underlying meanings. This method is particularly suitable for analyzing non-numerical data such as policy documents, curriculum standards, and syllabi, allowing researchers to interpret the policy intentions, educational ideologies, and instructional strategies embedded within music curriculum standards.

(2) Application in This Study: This study primarily focuses on the China's Art Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education 2022 and the South Korean 2022 Music Curriculum.

It adopts an inductive content analysis approach, implementing the following steps:

1. Text Preparation: The original policy documents are collected, processed, and transformed into an analyzable format (e.g., tabular representation).

2. Open Coding: The texts are systematically reviewed line by line to extract keywords and passages related to curriculum structure, learning objectives, teaching methods, and core educational philosophies.

3. Axial Coding: Extracted information is categorized based on the curriculum framework, leading to the identification of key themes such as musical literacy development, cultural heritage preservation, digital music education, and interdisciplinary integration.

4. Selective Coding: The relationships between the identified themes are further analyzed to synthesize the core educational philosophies of the Chinese and South Korean music curriculum standards, along with their policy implications and instructional strategies.

##### **3.1.2 Policy Document Analysis**

(1) Overview of the Method: Policy document analysis is a research method used to examine official policy documents to understand government policies, curriculum development rationales, and educational reforms. This approach helps reveal policy objectives, reform directions, and educational philosophies, providing contextual support for comparative curriculum analysis.

(2) Application in This Study: This study applies policy document analysis to examine government-issued reports, policy statements, and educational reform guidelines influencing the development of music curriculum standards in China and South Korea.

The analytical steps include: 1. Policy Background Review: Collecting recent policy documents related to music education, such as China's Overall Plan for Deepening the Reform of Educational Evaluation in the New Era and South Korea's 2022 Basic Plan for the Promotion of School Arts Education (Draft).

2. Policy Intent Analysis: Identifying key statements related to music curriculum reforms, focusing on objectives, policy motivations, and core educational values promoted by the government.

3. Policy Impact Assessment: Evaluating the influence of policies on curriculum frameworks, learning objectives, instructional content, and assessment methods.

4, Comparative Policy Analysis: Identifying similarities and differences between Chinese and South Korean policy frameworks in terms of policy rationale, reform priorities, and implementation strategies, while considering cultural, societal, and systemic differences in education.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

The primary research materials include the 2022 Compulsory Education Music Curriculum Standards of China and the South Korean 2022 Music Curriculum, alongside supplementary data such as related educational policy documents, academic articles, and government reports.

### **3.4 Analytical Framework**

This study adopts Bereday's Four-Step Method of Comparative Education to systematically analyze the curriculum standards of China and South Korea. As a widely used framework in international comparative education research, this method consists of the following four stages.

1. Description Stage: Conducting a textual analysis of the 2022 music curriculum standards in China and South Korea, summarizing their policy backgrounds, curriculum frameworks, learning objectives, and core educational philosophies.

2. Interpretation Stage: Examining the developmental logic of each curriculum standard by integrating insights from policy documents and relevant research, exploring their underlying educational ideologies and objectives.

3. Juxtaposition Stage: Conducting a comparative analysis of the two countries' music curriculum standards, focusing on policy orientations, curriculum design, instructional goals, and assessment frameworks.

4. Comparison and Conclusion Stage: Summarizing the similarities and differences between the Chinese and South Korean music curricula and proposing insights for future music curriculum reforms.

By utilizing this methodological framework, the study ensures a systematic and logical comparison of education policies, curriculum structures, and teaching objectives, offering valuable references for future advancements in arts education.

## **4. Results and Discussion**

### **4.1 Overview of China's Compulsory Education Music Curriculum Standards**

#### **4.1.1 Policy Background**

The 2022 Edition of China's Compulsory Education Music Curriculum Standards was formulated by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China as a key component of national basic education curriculum reform. It aims to implement national-level educational policies such as the Overall Plan for Deepening the Reform of Educational Evaluation in the New Era and the 2022 Edition of the Compulsory Education Curriculum Program. The revision of this standard aligns with the national requirements for aesthetic education in the new era, emphasizing the critical role of music education in fostering students' holistic development, enhancing cultural confidence, and cultivating creativity.

This standard extends and deepens the "aesthetic education" philosophy proposed in the 2011 Edition of the Compulsory Education Arts Curriculum Standards, while incorporating the artistic education innovation requirements outlined in the 14th Five-Year Plan for Advancing an Education Power. It further strengthens the educational value of music courses, promoting modernization, systematization, and diversification of curriculum content. The document explicitly states that music courses should integrate traditional Chinese culture while

incorporating modern music technology to align with the evolving needs of contemporary education.

#### **4.1.2 Curriculum Framework**

The 2022 Edition of the Compulsory Education Music Curriculum Standards adopts a “learning stage objectives + content domains” structure. It is divided into two main learning stages—primary school (Grades 1–6) and junior high school (Grades 7–9)—to establish a structured music education system tailored to students' developmental characteristics. Content is categorized into four major domains. Listening and Appreciation: Enhancing students' perceptual and interpretive skills in music by exposing them to diverse musical styles and cultural backgrounds to cultivate aesthetic appreciation. Performance: Developing students' musical expression through vocal training, instrumental performance, and rhythm exercises. Composition: Encouraging students to engage in basic melodic composition, lyric writing, and improvisation to foster creativity in music. Music and Culture: Strengthening the connection between music and social, historical, and cultural contexts to promote interdisciplinary learning and cultural identity.

#### **4.1.3 Learning Objectives**

The curriculum standards define explicit competency requirements for different learning stages, centering on the cultivation of core musical literacy, which comprises four key aspects.

Aesthetic Perception: Developing students' ability to perceive and appreciate musical works, enhancing their understanding and aesthetic judgment in music. Artistic Expression: Encouraging students to express emotions through singing, playing instruments, and performing, fostering self-confidence and stage presence. Cultural Understanding: Enhancing students' recognition of national and global musical cultures through exposure to traditional Chinese music and world music. Creative Practice: Cultivating students' ability to engage in musical creation, such as melodic composition, arrangement, and improvisation, to enhance their musical innovation skills.

Additionally, the curriculum emphasizes fundamental musical skills such as pitch accuracy, rhythm perception, and musical memory. It also encourages collaborative learning and ensemble performance to develop students' teamwork and social interaction abilities.

#### **4.1.4 Core Educational Concepts**

Promotion of Traditional Chinese Culture: The curriculum emphasizes the integration of Chinese folk music, opera, and traditional instruments into music education. Students are expected to learn, experience, and understand traditional Chinese music, enhancing cultural confidence and national identity. For instance, the curriculum incorporates Peking opera, folk songs, guzheng, and erhu, allowing students to appreciate the richness of Chinese musical heritage. Development of Artistic and Comprehensive Competencies: Beyond fundamental musical skills (e.g., pitch, rhythm, musicality), the curriculum underscores the role of music in emotional expression, aesthetic experience, and creative thinking. It encourages students to engage in active listening, singing, playing, and composing to refine their musical sensitivity and artistic literacy. Emphasis on Practical Music Learning: The curriculum prioritizes music practice, advocating for experiential learning through singing, instrumental performance, rhythmic training, and dance performance. Activities such as choral singing, traditional instrumental ensembles, and musical theater are viewed as essential for fostering teamwork and artistic expression. Diversification of Musical Learning Experiences: The curriculum encourages teachers to incorporate regional, ethnic, and historical music elements, helping students understand the cultural value of music.

It also supports the inclusion of global and contemporary music in the classroom to expose students to a variety of musical styles and broaden their artistic perspectives. Implementation of a Scientifically Sound Assessment System: The curriculum promotes a balanced evaluation approach that integrates formative and summative assessments, focusing on students' learning progress rather than merely numerical scores. Teachers are encouraged to assess students through classroom observations, performance evaluations, and creative music projects to ensure assessments reflect both musical literacy development and student engagement. Building upon its established strengths, the 2022 Edition of China's Compulsory Education Music Curriculum Standards further refines curriculum structure, reinforces core competency development, advocates for diverse and interdisciplinary teaching methods, and emphasizes music education's role in cultural heritage, aesthetic education, and creative ability cultivation. The implementation of this standard is expected to significantly contribute to the high-quality development of basic music education in China.

## **4.2 Overview of the South Korean Music Curriculum Standards**

### **4.2.1 Policy Background**

The formulation of South Korea's 2022 music curriculum standards is rooted in the national core education objectives, emphasizing creativity, emotional sensitivity, social adaptability, and cultural literacy to meet future societal needs. The Ministry of Education continuously advances arts education under the framework of the National Curriculum Standards to ensure the significance of music education within the overall educational system. The curriculum is designed to enable students to engage in musical activities with sensitivity, creativity, and self-direction while fostering music-based communication within their communities.

The 2022 General Framework of the National Curriculum (2022 개정 교육과정) introduced the concept of nurturing "creatively convergent talents" (창의융합형인재), highlighting the role of music education in enhancing students' comprehensive competencies. Additionally, the Promotion of Cultural and Arts Education Act (민화예술교육진흥법) supports the integration of arts into education, mandating government funding and encouraging local governments to implement arts education initiatives. Furthermore, the School Arts Education Support Policy (학교예술교육지원정책) promotes collaboration between schools and cultural institutions to enrich music education resources.

### **4.2.2 Curriculum Framework**

In South Korea, music is a compulsory subject throughout primary (grades 1–6) and lower secondary (grades 7–9) education, ensuring that every student receives foundational arts education.

The curriculum is structured into three core domains. Performance (연주): Focuses on vocal and instrumental performance, emphasizing musical expression and teamwork through active participation. Appreciation (감상): Develops students' ability to perceive, understand, and critically evaluate music, covering Korean traditional music, Western music, and global musical traditions. Composition (창작): Encourages students to engage in improvisation, arrangement, and composition, fostering creativity and integrative musical skills.

The curriculum adopts a spatial (local to global) and temporal (past to future) perspective, allowing students to develop a progressively expanding musical awareness.

### **4.2.3 Learning Objectives**

The 2022 South Korean Music Curriculum Standards aim to cultivate students' aesthetic

sensitivity (감성), creativity (창의성), self-directed learning (자기주도성), and communicative competence in social contexts.

The learning objectives encompass the following key aspects. Music Perception and Emotional Development: Encourages students to appreciate the aesthetic and emotional value of music, contributing to their emotional well-being and stability. Musical Creativity and Expressive Ability: Develops students' ability to explore and create new forms of musical expression, fostering innovation and originality. Self-Directed Learning in Music: Promotes active participation in musical activities and the formation of independent learning habits, ensuring sustained interest and engagement in music. Collaborative Musical Activities and Social Communication: Incorporates cooperative musical experiences, teaching students to respect diverse forms of musical expression and enhancing interpersonal communication skills. Understanding Musical Culture and Social Responsibility: Aims to instill cultural awareness and an understanding of music's societal role, encouraging students to contribute meaningfully to their cultural communities.

#### **4.2.4 Core Educational Concepts**

The 2022 South Korean Compulsory Education Music Curriculum Standards are guided by a competency-based framework that aligns with the General Framework of the National Curriculum. This ensures that music education is both specialized and integrated into the broader educational system.

The five core competencies outlined in the curriculum include. Aesthetic Sensibility Competency (감성 역량): Cultivates students' ability to perceive and appreciate the beauty of music. Creativity Competency (창의성 역량): Encourages students to explore the meaning of music and develop original musical works. Self-Directed Learning Competency (자기주도성 역량): Fosters independent engagement in music education and personal growth. Community Engagement Competency (공동체 역량): Develops students' ability to participate in and respect different forms of musical expression. Communicative Competency (소통 역량): Enhances students' ability to express themselves and connect with society through music. These core competencies are embedded within the curriculum content, teaching methodologies, and assessment strategies, ensuring a holistic approach to music education in South Korea.

### **4.3 Comparative Analysis of Learning Objectives in the Chinese and South Korean Music Curriculum Standards (2022)**

The learning objectives outlined in the 2022 Chinese and South Korean compulsory education music curriculum standards exhibit both similarities and differences in their pedagogical focus, reflecting each country's distinct educational philosophy and cultural priorities. While both frameworks emphasize the development of students' musical perception, expressive abilities, and cultural understanding, their approaches to these objectives vary in scope, emphasis, and implementation.

#### **4.3.1 Similarities in Learning Objectives**

Aesthetic Perception and Music Appreciation – Both frameworks emphasize the cultivation of students' ability to perceive and appreciate music. This includes recognizing different musical styles, developing listening skills, and forming an emotional connection with music. Musical Expression and Performance – Singing, instrumental performance, and rhythmic exercises form a core part of the learning process in both curricula, with an emphasis on expressive and technical development. Creativity and Composition – Encouraging students to engage in musical

composition and improvisation is a shared objective in both standards, aiming to nurture students' creative thinking and innovation. Cultural Understanding and Identity – Both curricula incorporate national and global music traditions, fostering cultural appreciation and the recognition of music’s role in societal development. Collaborative and Social Skills – Music is positioned as a medium for communication and collaboration, with group performances and interactive learning activities emphasized to enhance teamwork and social interaction.

### 4.3.2 Differences in Learning Objectives

Despite these overarching similarities, the Chinese and South Korean curricula diverge in specific areas, particularly in their approach to cultural identity, self-directed learning, and the role of music in broader educational objectives. The following table outlines key differences:

Aspect	China (2022 Music Curriculum Standard)	South Korea (2022 Music Curriculum Standard)
Cultural Focus	Strong emphasis on Chinese traditional music, including folk music, opera, and classical instruments. Integration of modern music technology is also encouraged.	Promotes understanding of both Korean traditional music (e.g., gugak) and international music, with an emphasis on music as a tool for global cultural exchange.
Learning Approach	Structured progression from foundational music skills to more complex understanding, aligning with national educational reforms to strengthen cultural confidence.	Emphasizes a self-directed and experiential learning approach, encouraging students to explore music beyond the classroom setting.
Creative Development	Encourages students to engage in structured composition exercises, integrating lyrics, melodies, and improvisational elements.	Prioritizes student-led creative exploration, allowing for more open-ended musical improvisation and experimentation.
Emphasis on Emotional and Social Growth	Highlights music’s role in emotional well-being, personal development, and moral education.	Music is positioned as a medium for communication and social engagement, aligning with broader educational goals of fostering collaboration.
Assessment and Evaluation	Incorporates formative and summative assessment strategies, with a strong emphasis on student progress in skill development and appreciation of Chinese musical heritage.	Uses a combination of process-oriented and competency-based evaluation, emphasizing students' ability to express themselves through music.

### 4.4 Comparative Analysis of Core Educational Concepts in the Chinese and South Korean Music Curriculum Standards (2022)

The core educational philosophies underpinning the 2022 music curriculum standards in China and South Korea reflect their respective national educational priorities, cultural values, and pedagogical traditions. Both frameworks aim to cultivate students' musical literacy, creativity, and cultural awareness, but they differ in their emphasis on cultural identity, pedagogical

approaches, and student autonomy.

4.4.1 Similarities in Learning Objectives

Despite contextual differences, both the Chinese and South Korean music curriculum standards share several fundamental educational concepts.

Holistic Development Through Music – Both frameworks view music education as a means of fostering students’ cognitive, emotional, and social development, rather than focusing solely on technical proficiency. Competency-Based Learning – The two curricula emphasize core competencies such as musical perception, creative expression, and cultural understanding, ensuring that students develop transferable skills beyond music itself. Integration of Cultural Heritage and Global Perspectives – While prioritizing their respective traditional music, both standards incorporate international musical elements to enhance students' global awareness and appreciation of diverse musical cultures. Interdisciplinary Learning – Both curricula encourage cross-disciplinary integration, linking music with other art forms, history, and technology to foster a broader understanding of artistic expression. Lifelong Learning and Social Engagement – Music education is positioned as a lifelong learning process that contributes to personal enrichment and social participation, reinforcing the role of music in fostering community and communication skills.

4.4.2 Differences in Learning Objectives

While China and South Korea share overarching goals, their specific approaches to music education diverge in key areas, as summarized in the table below:

Aspect	China (2022 Music Curriculum Standard)	South Korea (2022 Music Curriculum Standard)
Government supports	Primarily led by the Ministry of Education, with emphasis on the harmonized implementation of curriculum standards	Optimizing music education by combining government, social institutions and local resources
Role of Cultural Identity	Strong emphasis on fostering national identity through music, particularly Chinese traditional music and cultural symbols.	Emphasizes both national identity and global cultural exchange, encouraging students to explore diverse musical traditions.
Approach to Creativity	Encourages structured creativity, guiding students through composition and improvisation within predefined frameworks.	Fosters open-ended exploration, allowing students more autonomy in musical creation and interpretation.
Pedagogical Approach	Teacher-centered instruction, where educators play a primary role in guiding students through systematic learning progressions.	Student-centered, promoting self-exploration and collaborative learning experiences.
Integration of Technology	Supports the use of digital tools and music technology to enhance learning, particularly in composition and performance analysis.	Actively incorporates digital resources and media to facilitate interactive and immersive learning experiences.
Assessment and Evaluation	Combines formative and summative assessments, with a focus on technical	Uses competency-based assessment, prioritizing individual expression,

	skill mastery and appreciation of cultural heritage.	collaboration, and process-oriented learning outcomes.
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## 5. Conclusion and Suggestion

This study conducted a comparative analysis of the 2022 Chinese Compulsory Education Music Curriculum Standards and the 2022 South Korean Music Curriculum Standards, examining the similarities and differences in policy objectives, curriculum framework, learning goals and core concepts. The findings indicate that while both countries emphasize the aesthetic function of music education, cultural heritage, core competency development, and the importance of practice-based learning, notable differences exist in curriculum structure, technological integration, and interdisciplinary approaches. These differences reflect the unique characteristics of each country's music education philosophy, shaped by distinct sociocultural backgrounds, educational policies, and pedagogical practices.

Both curriculum standards converge in recognizing the role of music in enhancing students' aesthetic appreciation, creativity, and socio-emotional development, aligning with global trends in music education. However, South Korea places greater emphasis on interdisciplinary integration and digital technology, such as the application of STEAM education in music teaching, whereas China adopts a more systematic approach to the preservation and transmission of national music traditions, reinforcing cultural identity through structured curriculum design. Additionally, South Korea favors inquiry-based and collaborative learning models, while China emphasizes the development of practical musical skills, such as performance and composition. Furthermore, assessment approaches differ, with South Korea prioritizing process-oriented evaluation and personalized feedback, whereas China continues to rely heavily on standardized testing and skill-based assessments.

### 5.1 Discussion: Future development of music education

By comparing the core educational philosophies of the Chinese and South Korean compulsory music curriculum standards, this study identifies shared principles in aesthetic education, cultural heritage, competency-based learning, social engagement, and multicultural understanding, while also highlighting key differences in curriculum implementation, technology integration, and the use of social resources. Based on these insights, the following strategies are proposed to optimize compulsory music education, ensuring its effectiveness in fostering core competencies, strengthening cultural identity, and enhancing interdisciplinary learning.

#### 1. Strengthening the Emotional Function of Music

Despite both curriculum standards emphasizing the role of music in holistic development, further efforts are needed to enhance the emotional and psychological benefits of music education. Curriculum Enhancement: Future curriculum design should incorporate emotion-regulation and music therapy principles, drawing from existing research on music-based stress relief and psychological resilience [14]. Pedagogical methods such as music meditation, rhythm training, and expressive performance can be employed to support students' emotional well-being.

#### 2. Enhancing Practice-Based Learning for Interactive Music Education

Both curriculum standards highlight the importance of practical engagement in music learning, but more diverse and interactive learning methods should be implemented. Cross-Cultural Exchange [15] Programs: Collaborative projects between Chinese and Korean students, such as virtual music concerts and joint composition initiatives, can foster intercultural musical understanding and broaden students' global perspectives. Community-Based Music Activities:

Inspired by South Korea's Community [16] Music Practice model, Chinese schools could introduce school-community partnerships, where students engage in public performances at museums or cultural centers, increasing the social relevance of music education.

### 3. Expanding AI Education in Music Teaching

Both curriculum standards emphasize the importance of technological integration in students' learning practices. Given the rapid advancement of AI, there is a timely opportunity to enhance students' engagement with AI tools in the classroom. Under teacher supervision, the incorporation of AI-driven applications can foster adaptive learning, creative exploration, and a more interactive music education experience, ensuring that students develop the necessary skills to navigate and innovate in an evolving digital landscape. AI-Assisted Music Education: The use of AI-assisted [17] composition tools such as Simply Piano and Magenta Studio can enhance students' creative abilities and foster computational thinking in music composition.

## 5.2 Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study employed text analysis and comparative research methods to examine the similarities and differences between the music curriculum standards in compulsory education in China and South Korea. However, several limitations should be acknowledged.

First, lack of empirical research: This study primarily relies on policy documents for comparison, without incorporating empirical data. Future research could integrate classroom observations, teacher interviews, and student learning outcome analyses to validate the actual impact of different educational models.

Second, regional variations in implementation: While this study compares national-level curriculum standards, practical implementation may vary across different regions and schools. Future research could investigate local music education practices to obtain more representative and nuanced conclusions.

Third, long-term impact of technology integration: With the increasing prevalence of AI, VR, and digital music tools, future studies should assess their long-term effects on music education. Key questions include whether these technologies truly enhance students' creativity and musical understanding or inadvertently lead to increased learning burdens and reduced teacher-student interaction.

By conducting a comparative analysis of the Chinese and South Korean music curriculum standards, this study provides a series of optimization suggestions that may contribute to music education reforms not only in these two countries but also on a global scale. Looking ahead, music education should strive to balance cultural heritage with modern educational technologies, explore more diverse and personalized teaching approaches, and better adapt to the evolving needs of 21st-century learners. This will help ensure the continuous development of music education in an increasingly interconnected world.

### Disclosure Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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