Exploring the Teaching Skills and Needs of Studio Piano Teachers with Mature Aged Students in Halifax, Nova Scotia

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Abstract

Connecting piano teachers who work in isolated situations with recent research and training is difficult, especially when accreditation, registration with professional bodies, training or ongoing professional development is not mandatory. In previous Australian and international studies, many piano teachers have reported that they do not feel comfortable teaching adults who have reported difficulty finding suitable teachers. Historically, piano performance qualifications have excluded pedagogical training particularly for adults. Current trends defer pedagogical studies to the postgraduate level whilst piano teachers have requested it at earlier stages of their training. To solve these issues within the piano teaching industry, this study set out to examine the teaching skills and needs of both piano teachers and their adult students in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Qualitative data was collected using face-to-face meetings, email, questionnaires, student journals, teacher reflections, videos and skype interviews. The study produced a set of guidelines for teaching adults that addressed the research criteria. Existing teaching skills emerged in five subthemes: Performance Related Skills, Personal Skills, Teaching Approaches, Student Learning Styles, and Teaching Strategies. The teacher's needs included andragogic training at earlier levels of study, guidelines for adult students, business practices, expanded professional development opportunities and a repertoire for adult students. Students confirmed the need for flexibility, understanding teachers, less performance and technical skills, facilitative or dictatorial roles relating to skill levels, practice schedules and demonstration of repertoire and practice skills. The study concluded that inclusion of andragogic studies better prepares teachers for increasing numbers of adult learners.

Keywords andragogy, communities of practice, piano pedagogy, teacher training

BACKGROUND

Investigations into a viable national accreditation system for Australian studio piano teachers by Gwatkin (2008) unearthed several subthemes, such as qualifications and training. Neither a minimum nor mandatory qualification was linked to the piano teaching profession, with no requirement for registration or ongoing professional development. For comparative purposes, this study included an in-depth review of

music training on a global level in the United States (US), United Kingdom (UK), Europe, Canada and Scandinavia that found similar accreditation structures and qualifications. When compared with accreditation contexts for other Australian industries such as Law, Medicine, Finance and Insurance, Accounting and Engineering, Gwatkin (2008) found rigorous qualifications, registration and professional development benchmarks at minimum degree level. Likewise, classroom music teachers were subject to the same professional standards and there exists a growing requirement for school instrument teachers to have some formal qualifications, particularly in education.

More specific to this study, a review of the Canadian situation revealed occupations are regulated or non-regulated. Studio piano teaching is a non-regulated industry having no minimum or mandatory qualifications, registration or ongoing professional development akin to the rest of the instrument teaching profession. Canadian universities and qualifications are regulated on a provincial basis but a university accreditation scheme exists to encourage portability and equality between the provinces and territories. There is a Music Teachers Association (MTA) in each province that belongs to the national body, the Canadian Federation of Music Teachers Associations (CFMTA), which is not federally accredited but does provide certification and professional development. There are also two public examination boards, The Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) and Conservatory Canada that are both federally accredited through the Ministry of Education.

Potential Canadian piano teachers receive training at both accredited and non-accredited organisations. Accredited institutions operate within higher education (universities), vocational education and training (community colleges), public examination boards, RCM and Conservatory Canada. Non-accredited organisations include state-based Music Teacher Associations (MTAs) and private businesses who offer in-house professional development and/or unaccredited courses for teachers. Initial investigations found little evidence of pedagogy or adult teaching.

An outline of the studio piano teaching accreditation and training context in Canada is presented in Figure 1.

Twenty-two university programmes were found in Nova Scotia giving opportunity for students and teachers alike to study locally. However, only two programs specified music education or instrument teaching (Acadia University) whilst others focused on music theatre, music therapy, theory-history, theory-composition, music technology, music business (option), arts administration and jazz studies.

In Nova Scotia, career colleges such as the Centre for Arts and Technology offer four certificate or diploma programmes in music production that focus on the digital music industry, audio engineering, electronic music production, studio production and the electronic music artist.
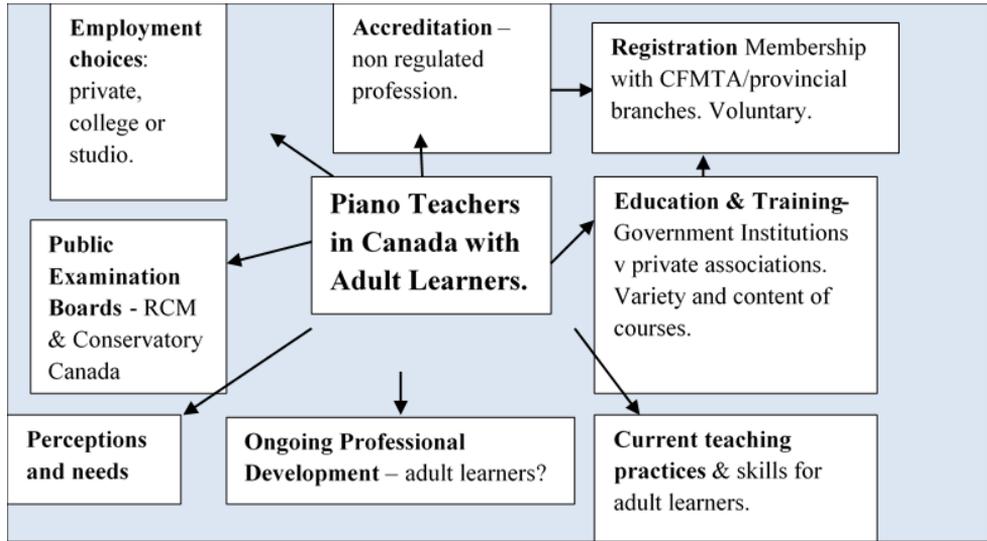
Figure 1 Initial conceptual framework: Piano Teaching Context in Canada (McMillan, 2016).

Both the RCM and Conservatory Canada offer graded levels of exams for students and teacher training opportunities through diploma examinations in performance or pedagogy without specifying learner age groups. The initial framework for adult piano learning in Canada is summarised in Figure 2.
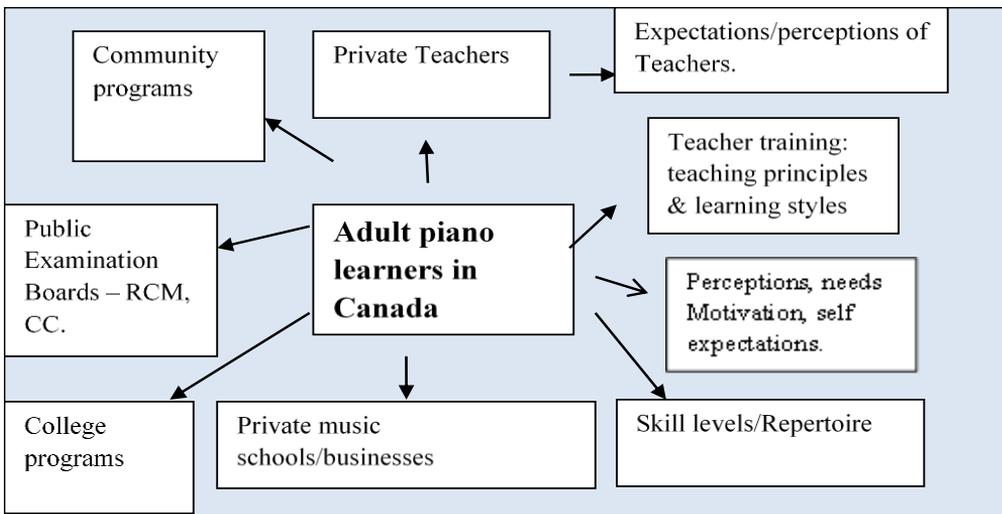

Figure 2 Adult Piano Learning Context in Canada (McMillan, 2016).

Although there exists a wide range of accredited national qualifications for piano studies in Canada and other international contexts, they were found to be predominately performance based on historical and technique literature. Such

antiquated training is contrary to the developmental, educational, psychological and strategic teaching skills, creating dilemmas for professional identity and portfolio careers. Recent evidence collected has found the inclusion of pedagogic studies for all instrumentalists at two universities in Nova Scotia that is an improvement, but needs to be implemented on a national scale. Without age relevance and content, it can be assumed that most courses still focus on teaching young beginners and repertoire as outlined above. Gwatkin (2008) offered a new definition of pedagogy as: The combined principles and practices (physiological, psychological, educational, developmental, business and performance practices) of teaching (the piano), later revised to specify inclusion of any age group that is embedded in a triangular approach (Figure 3).
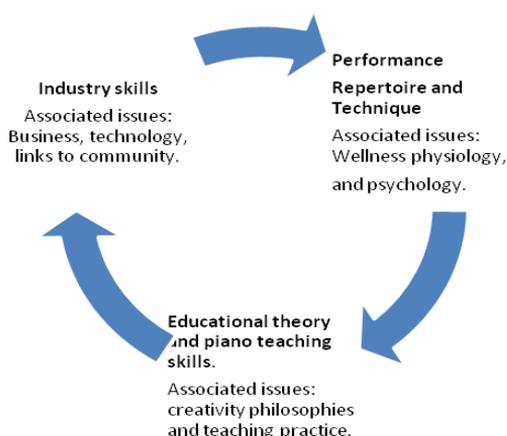

Figure 3 Proposed approach for training piano teachers (Gwatkin, 2008).

Andragogy in Education

In 1833, German educator Alexander Kapp coined the term 'andragogy' to differentiate it from pedagogy. Knowles (1984) reintroduced the term andragogy after developing the five assumptions about the characteristics of adult learners: Self-concept, adult learner experience, readiness to learn, orientation to learning and motivation to learn. Knowles (1984) speculated that, "as individuals mature, their need and capacity to be self-directing, to utilize [sic] their experience in learning, to identify their own readiness to learn, and to organize their learning around life problems, increases" (p. 53). He maintained that as learning tasks increase in difficulty the appropriate theory and teaching method should be selected.

Despite this, 'pedagogy' is commonly used to describe instrumental teaching units and conference brochures without making any distinction for age groups. Empirical research by Gwatkin (2008) from Australian and international teachers unearthed that piano teachers desired pedagogical training from the outset furthering support for certificate level training common in the US. Indeed, many piano teachers stated that they did not feel comfortable teaching adults yet with a growing wealthy and maturing population many adults are returning to or

commencing piano lessons but are having difficulty finding suitably experienced or trained teachers.

Tait and Haack (1984) found that,

> Teaching involves the diagnosis of student needs and the selection of strategies, styles, and materials to meet those needs… [it] requires a repertoire of non-verbal strategies including modelling and demonstration abilities, and verbal strategies including professional, behavioural, and experiential vocabularies… Personal and organizational management skills are an essential adjunct to efficient and effective teaching. (p. 69)

Cole and Chan (1994) favour the Teaching Principles Model which offers a set of identifiable principles that act as a guideline for effective teaching in a wide variety of instructional areas and settings: communication, planning and preparation, explanation and demonstration, questioning, assigning work tasks, feedback and correctives, assessment and evaluation, class management, motivation and reinforcement, promotion of independent learning (p. 12).

In summary, adults need to be treated and taught in a variety of ways that differ from children, favour and autonomy being given to some for their learning where appropriate, driving teachers to develop different roles and skills as their students mature cognitively and practically. The following section examines how this research has provided answers for the instrument teaching community focusing on piano teaching where appropriate.

Andragogy in Instrumental Tuition

Historically, performance, repertoire and technique were the primary focus in both teaching and learning in instrument teaching. Adult learning is a more recent addition to pedagogical thinking.

Orlofsky and Smith (1997) reported the positive characteristics of adult students as being willing and eager to learn, having the ability to stay on task, being goal oriented, analytical, psychologically mature and physically coordinated, but without mature motor capabilities and being intellectually mature. They further report sociologist Marciano's (1990) findings that teachers were "generally unwilling to teach late in the evening… that would accommodate adult's leisure time… and do not want to constantly rearrange schedules… Adult freedoms present teachers with the need to negotiate, rather than dictate, what will occur in the lesson" (p. 25).

At the time in the 1990s, only a small percentage of the literature addressed the subject of adult keyboard learners. Lessons therefore focused primarily on group lessons over short periods of time, with methods and course materials taken from popular commercial material. Without access to formal pedagogy training, teachers were "urged to take the time to research and understand the characteristics and needs of adult keyboards students, choose appropriate methods material and pedagogical approaches, and develop the talents of this special age-group" (Orlofsky & Smith, 1997, p. 26).

Graessle (2000) outlined teacher benefits of increased income and opportunity to develop rewarding relationships and friendships. For adults the benefits include "fulfilling what is often a life-long dream… studying music may help relieve stress and, for retired adults, can fulfil intellectual, physical, and social needs no longer found in the workplace" (p.1).

Duke (2000) explains,

> There are many factors that influence how effective people's instructional efforts will be, including the time they allocate to teaching, verbal and non- verbal behaviours, the type of music activities they engage their students in, and measures they take to specifically improve their teaching. (p. 185)

Like educational factors mentioned previously, communication, content, student-teacher relationships, organisation and personal qualities are key factors.

Bruckner (2008) offers a multi-sensory guide to practice, performance and pedagogy in learning styles. She outlines the use of visual, aural and kinaesthetic cues from the learner to assist teachers in designing appropriate teaching approaches. Arranging the studio with different sensory learning areas helps student learning but also requires greater effort on the part of the teacher to be creative in designing appropriate activities and space. Linking to creative activities espoused by authors Orff, Kodaly, Gordon and Dalcroze would be of great assistance.

McMillan (2011) found that the teaching role was often that of a friend, confidant and advisor, entailing greater listening skills but was emotionally exhausting. Timetabling was a positive change as day and evening teaching replaced late afternoon lessons, leaving room for school students. Opportunities for communities of practice were arranged in the form of adult performance soirees, discussions, duets and trio rehearsals and family events necessitating extra effort in planning and executing. However, students seemed to study longer than other teachers reported. Several students reported they had great difficulty finding teachers with suitable experience or without a prior agenda.

McMillan (2011) also found teaching Australian and Malaysian adults provided opportunities to transition from didactic teaching to facilitation. Employing a range of teaching strategies, such as experiential, lifelong, self-paced/directed and e-learning, to student's individual and developmental needs, led to positive experiences, development of confidence, increased performance skills, less frustration, contribution of repertoire, immediate reinforcement, support and clarification. Teacher outcomes included a slower paced approach to develop physical skills, a variety of teaching roles, personal skills such as patience, listening and empathy, greater explanation and greater rate of progress, repertoire and information exchange.

Roulston and Jutras (2015) describe a variety of teaching and learning strategies undertaken in private individual lessons.

> In some cases, participants preferred a flexible and informal style that changed with each lesson. They valued the opportunity to contribute their ideas on what lessons should entail… other participants were very specific… [being very self-sufficient]

> Greg described a preference for self-directed learning… coaching and supervision from somebody who was much more knowledgeable than I am and can catch my bad habits. (p. 331)

Perkins, Aufegger and Williamon (2015) investigated the learning of conservatoire students as they taught older adults. Motivated by a desire to broaden and develop existing teaching skills, student teachers realised that adults have

> potential for learning… a lifetime of experiences that can and do inform the ways in which they learn music… a strong motivation for progress and achievement, determination… manifested in a commitment to practise and learning, as well as a resolve to overcome barriers to progression. (p. 85)

Teachers reflected that learning was not focused on technical or reading mastery for these adults and subsequently were driven to redesign their teaching 'bag of tricks' (Perkins et al., 2015, p. 86) and develop new skills to become 'knowledgably skilful' in the process (Lave, 1991, p.65).

In summary, piano teachers are not required to fulfil any minimum qualifications, registration or professional development compared to other professional industries. Despite this, a wide range of accredited qualifications are available but historically have focused on performance skills rather than teaching skills as embodied in educational and music education research. Although this situation is gradually improving, it is still difficult to reach teachers who are isolated and under qualified. With a growing but select body of literature regarding educational, pedagogical and andragogic practices in piano teaching, this study set out to investigate current teaching practices and needs of piano teachers with adult students, how they coped to fulfil their students needs and goals, and if this was related to the amount of training they had received.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The main ideas of the study were directed at: 1) analysis of existing teaching skills in providing adequate preparation for adult teaching; 2) the needs and perceptions of Canadian studio piano teachers for adult students; and 3) the needs and expectations of their adult students. This study was set in Halifax, Nova Scotia following an initial meeting with the Nova Scotia Registered Music Teachers Research Group at the International Society of Music Education Conference (2010) who was looking for opportunities to be involved in current piano pedagogic research. Subsequent email and Skype discussions between the researcher in Malaysia and a local contact in Halifax outlined the project and who was also a coordinator for the study. An onsite visit was facilitated to meet potential teachers and discuss study parameters, selection of students, confidentiality and study relevance. The local contact appointed as the coordinator engaged willing teachers and coordinated communication with the researcher. Teachers selected students from their private practices and recommended them to the join the study via the coordinator.

Participants

Four teachers (CT1-CT4) participated in the research conducted over a 10-week period of individual piano lessons between September and December 2011. All of the teachers were female, between 60-70 years of age and were working as full time piano teachers in home studios. CT3 was qualified in performance of several instruments.

Student participants were comprised of four males and six females (CS1-10) with ages ranging from 22 to 66 with the largest number in the 55-60-year age bracket (Table 1). The coordinator forwarded contact details to the teacher and student participants with an initial letter and consent form thereby confirming the study parameters. Once the consent form was received the first materials were then forwarded.

Methodology

In line with qualitative research, multiple methods of data collection were employed. The study used qualitative interpretive questionnaires, journals, reflections, videos and interviews to obtain data from four teachers (CT1-4) and their student participants (CS1-10).

Firstly, data was gathered from teachers by an initial questionnaire which gleaned information on the musical history, training particularly for adult teaching, perceptions of teaching skills required (personal and professional), repertoire, strategies and approaches used. Questions (*N=12*) were generally multi-choice with additional space left for further information or comments. Secondly, each teacher kept a reflective journal on each student over the duration of the lessons guided by an example posed by the author as to lesson content (a summary or copy of notes from the student notebook if applicable), student progress, teaching style, adjustments made, repertoire chosen, personal feelings, student feedback and any anecdotes/quotes or paraphrases that were relevant. Finally, each teacher was asked to record two videos of each student approximately half way through the project and again at the completion to demonstrate and provide physical evidence of their teaching and progress. At the end of the project the teacher participants completed a final interview of six questions through Skype on the benefits or challenges of the study, future teaching plans and future requirements specific to adult students.

Student data included three multiple-choice questionnaires (Initial, Mid-Project and Final) to demonstrate the process and any progress over the given period. The Initial Questionnaire (*N=12*) included their backgrounds, goals and achievements thereof, expectations of teachers' skills (personal and professional), teaching strategies and approaches and any awareness of their learning style (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic). Subsequent questionnaires (*N=13*) were designed on the same questions but amended to include current data particularly on their progress or lack thereof and additional comments in the final question. From the initial questionnaire, profiles of each student's background and their incentives to study were gathered and are outlined in Table 1. Students also completed a journal of weekly improvement to record their feelings about goals to improve before and after

their practice time in each column. An example was provided. To dispel any anxiety the instructions also stated "If you do not practice then you don't have to write anything. It does not matter if you miss the whole week. Just write that too as it also useful" (McMillan, 2016, Appendix 13).

Table 1 Profiles of Canadian Student participants

Teacher	Student	Age bracket	Gender	Work Status	Grade completed	Incentive
CT1	CS3	55-60	M	Retired	Licentiate Trinity College London (diploma)	Personal interest, regain proficiency. Revisiting piano after 38 years.
CT2	CS1	30-35	F	Full Time	Grade 4	For work.
	CS4	55-60	M	Full Time	Grade 9	Advancement. Love of piano music.
	CS5	55-60	F	Part Time	Grade 9, Intermediate Pedagogy	Role model for daughters.
	CS9	20-25	M	Part Time shifts	Unknown	Grade 10 & Grade 5 Harmony. Aiming for college.
	CS10	approx. 45-50	F	Part Time	Grade10	[Grade 10 & Grade 4 History. Teach in future.
CT3	CS2 accordion	55-60	M	Full Time	No answer	Community, friends and family.
CT4	CS6	35-40	F	Full Time Home duties	Grade 3	Regain skills, after 6-7 yrs.
	CS7	20	F	Part Time student	Grade 7	Grade 8 finally. Possibly teach.
	CS 8	45-50	F	Full Time	Nil	Personal interest, time, play well, 25 yr break.

Analysis

Email and Skype maintained communications as required. All data was emailed to the local coordinator who sent it to the teachers and their students. Replies were posted or emailed directly from teachers or students to the researcher, upon which all participants and teachers were coded for confidentiality. Data between teachers and students was examined separately until the analysis stage where it was used to find corresponding answers or anomalies. Teacher and student journals were particularly useful for verification and clarification of dates and reasons for absenteeism and personal stories. Each set of data was transcribed into tables that were then combined into one document (e.g. all first questionnaires for teachers) by question. It was then easy to compare both the teachers' and students' answers for related questions. Parallels and anomalies were identified which informed the research questions. Firstly, examining existing teaching skills required for mature aged piano teachers led to the development of five emergent themes: a) performance related skills; b) personal skills; c) a knowledge of teaching approaches (a broad methodology learned from training or their own piano history); d) knowledge of the student's learning style (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic); and finally e) teaching strategies (specific ways to assist learning and motivation during learning, within the lesson and beyond). Secondly, the needs and perceptions of Canadian studio piano teachers in relation to adult students included andragogic training within undergraduate and postgraduate studies, guidelines for adult students, business practices, professional development and repertoire for adult students. Finally, the needs and perceptions of adult students required flexibility, understanding and personable teachers, and less performance and technical skills, facilitation and dictatorial roles relating to different skill levels, practice schedules and demonstration of repertoire and practice skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teacher Outcomes

All teachers were qualified in performance and/or pedagogy with accredited qualifications but only CT1 and CT2 had specific adult pedagogical training and experience, at undergraduate and postgraduate levels respectively. CT1 and CT3 had focused on performance criteria. For these three teachers, their initial training would have been in the late 1970s or early 1980s when the adult teaching was just beginning. Although Knowles (1984) proposed progressive teaching strategies and Orlofsky and Smith (1997) later described the positive benefits, teachers were still reluctant (Marciano, 1990) and the pedagogy received would have been sparse and for group situations. It is not surprising that teachers sought other sources for pedagogy and repertoire such as from tutor books, trial and error experiences, observation, mentoring and unspecified professional development.

CT4 was relatively new to teaching and teaching adults in general and was trained only through RCM examinations that she reported included some adult

pedagogy although this was not clearly specified in the courses when reviewed. CT4 stated,

> I think that if money wasn't an issue that I would not teach adults. I know a number of teachers that don't. I find that the teaching techniques that work with children are not successful with adults. In fact, I've had little success with adult students. I had one lady start lessons who thought that because she could type that she could play the piano without practicing. She lasted three weeks.

Both CT3 and CT4 who had little training in teaching adults struggled with their adult students in different ways. CT4 wrote of her "complete disappointment with her students' practice and performance" and was often used as a counsellor by a long-term student, echoing the emotional exhaustion found by McMillan (2011). CT3 preferred beginners, as they have 'no agenda' and often didn't charge fees to students due to the disadvantaged area that she worked in. They particularly required assistance in business and personal parameters which to date have not been common elements in pedagogy courses yet, as suggested by Gwatkin (2008). Perkins et. al (2015) suggested that exposing student-teachers to adults helped gain valuable experience before career commencement that would diffuse negativity and frustration. Results indicated that the RCM course or performance qualifications alone were insufficient for the teaching of adult learners. CT4 was innovative, making her own questionnaire for future students based on the initial student questionnaire that could also be used for ongoing revision. Opportunities are ripe for MTAs, collegial sharing and e-learning.

On a personal level, patience and understanding were foremost, as demonstrated in teacher reflections, videos and student journals. All teachers quickly established good communication, rapport and trust with their students by encouragement, humour and questioning techniques (Duke, 1990). CT1, CT2 and CT4 seemed to enjoy teaching adults finding them 'inspiring', 'challenging' and 'fun', in-line with the positive characteristic outlined by Orlofsky and Smith (1997) and McMillan (2011). Being active experienced adults facilitated them to engage students for social, emotional and psychological benefits (Creech, Varvarigoum, Hallam, McQueen & Gaunt, 2013). CT4 stated, "I had one very intelligent man who came to me with a written list of goals that he wanted to accomplish. He struggled a bit, but achieved what he set out to do. That was interesting experience for me. I learned from him".

Teachers' journals demonstrated sound knowledge of performance and musical skills whilst teaching skills and motivational strategies were not always successful. Reflections of student journals and videos indicated the ability to diagnose student needs, select materials and verbal questioning (Tait & Haack, 1984). However, videos and student journals exposed a deficit of non-verbal skills, modelling and demonstration, and contradicted teachers' answers on their Initial Questionnaires wherein they espoused this as the most important teaching skill. Even though all teachers performed consistently in a variety of settings and provided performance opportunities for their students on a regular basis, videos rarely presented anything more than a performance which was not requested. Only

CT2, the most qualified in pedagogy and postgraduate studies, provided an insight into her teaching style which primarily used questioning techniques. CS2, a student of CT3 reported, "I enjoy playing with my teacher". Obviously, her performance major had positively impacted the ways her students were taught and ultimately performed (confidently). The video camera was regarded as a good teaching and review tool to use, and helped students overcome some fears about performing whilst in a safe environment.

Some teachers clearly were disappointed in their students' progress or lack of commitment and whilst being empathetic to students' lifestyle found the over commitment frustrating both in a professional sense and for the students' progress. CS6 and CS8 discontinued studies at the end of the study. CT4 stated, "I learned about my limitations teaching adults… I will only accept adults if I feel that I can live with their goals and time commitment instead of being frustrated week after week then they don't meet my expectations". CS6 was identified as being an aural learner but was being taught primarily by visual methods. CT4 stated, "I think they realized that they just didn't have the time to commit to learning piano at this stage of their lives". Clearly, early identification as advocated by Bruckner (2008) may have helped here together with motivational and reinforcement strategies. Issues were raised regarding the balance between progress and fun, and practice versus commitment echo findings of student teachers in Perkins et al. (2015). CT4's adoption of the initial questionnaire as an interview tool would certainly help identify student goals at the outset thereby assisting the teachers to adopt the most appropriate strategy as outlined by McMillan (2011) and Roulston and Jutras (2015).

Looking to the future teachers sought to compare and exchange information with others for support, explore new materials and approaches and keep learning about adult teaching. They were keen to continue teaching adults as they find them inspiring and highly motivated but need boundaries and clear-cut goals. All teachers were happy to receive further assistance and requested guidelines for teaching adults. They enjoyed the study immensely and found it was worthwhile and interesting; highlighted the ability to reflect on lessons and subsequently their own teaching, communication, expectations, experience or lack thereof and the impact of physical injuries.

More specifically teachers felt the study highlighted a love of adult piano students, a need for clearer communication between themselves and the student, careful listening to themselves and the student, defining and reviewing expectations for both teacher and student, a lack of experience and training in adult pedagogy, precise and diligent notes, designing and implementing an initial questionnaire for all future students. They also appreciated that adults can learn different instruments and are different to children requiring different strategies and teaching strategies and personal skills; they have physical injuries, overloaded lifestyles. Consequently, requirements for future experience and training in adult pedagogy were requested and included professional development opportunities, discussion and exchange of issues and experiences with other teachers, business practices such as payment and lesson contracts, dealing with adult agendas and, dealing with their own agendas and commitments. Specific guidelines were requested for: a) insight into what

works well with adult students; b) how to teach them differently than children; c) teaching materials, strategies and approaches required for adult learners; and finally, d) repertoire required for adult learners.

Student Outcomes

Of the 10 students, only one was a beginner with the remaining students learning at intermediate and advanced levels but with large gaps in learning requiring skills revision (refer to Table 1). The students were very focused on what they wanted to learn, when they wanted to learn and had a long-term view including performance and study for exams, reflecting findings by Orlofsky and Smith (1977) and Perkins et. al (2015). They brought a wide selection of music repertoire related to their backgrounds and work experiences: classical, popular, war hymns, songs for the aged and Irish Jigs. Several had played other instruments and one was an accordionist.

Goals included memorising pieces, retrieving and improving skills and working towards exams or special events that required different teaching profiles as students improved (Shokheida, 2016). Goals were mainly achieved or improved upon within the period. Memorisation was one of the student goals yet was recorded as a process undertaken after the piece was learned rather than through efficient and mindful practice techniques during the learning process (Kohut, 1985) or learning style (Bruckner, 2008). Only CS9 performed his piece from memory.

The overriding factor in choosing a teacher was personality and flexibility of approach rather than good performance or technical skills contrary to their training. It also required teachers to determine their teaching style (McMillan, 2011; Roulston & Jutras, 2015) Students quickly established good rapport with their teachers and used them both personally and professionally for counselling and problem solving although boundaries were sometimes crossed. All students were extremely happy with their teachers for their personal skills and wanted to continue with them.

Students reported physical issues including arthritis and back problems but these did not appear to be impacting practice or progress on a major level. Videos demonstrated some students needed to adjust their posture, alignment and seating that would improve their playing outcomes and possibly be impacting their physical issues. Only CT8 who had very small hands and tendonitis in her left hand sought medical assistance that resulted in her examination being delayed. CT4 accommodated her injury by shortening lessons and finding more suitable repertoire as the student wanted to continue. She also provided technical work that seemed to contradict alternative medical advice recommending rest followed by a paced return.

Without exception, all students had very busy lifestyles and were often quite overloaded that negatively impacted their practice, motivation and teachers. The amount of repertoire given varied from two pieces to over five at times which became even more unachievable and frustrating in addition to their family and work commitments. CT4 often changed pieces with her students not allowing them to attain a specified level that clearly impacted their performance. CS3 surged ahead learning new and difficult pieces to the detriment of developing and consolidating

technical, speed and practice routines that clearly needed modelling (Tait & Haack, 1984). Despite this, students were happy to continue with their teachers having developed trusting and working relationships. A desire for group work was expressed and would provide motivation and assistance in communities of practice.

Data received revealed that teachers provided the most experiences in technical, performance opportunities and personal style that attested to students' needs. Students' answers revealed that seven were visual learners, two were aural learners and one was kinaesthetic. Teachers were in general, unaware of the students' learning styles but a general flexibility of style ensured the teachers covered most learning abilities. Contradictory evidence was found between the students' perceptions of their teachers addressing their learning style and/or the music. However, all agreed that both were addressed in some form. The results indicate an impact on learning improvement during the lessons and at home. In most cases, only slight alterations were necessary to associate the teaching style with the learner style. However, for CS6 who was clearly an auditory learner, a major problem arose as she struggled with the same visual approach offered to CT4's other students. For CT2, a broad-spectrum approach seemed to work well for all learning styles yet lacked demonstration and role modelling. Adopting Bruckner's (2008) approach could easily be individualised for higher results.

Overall, students reported that the main strategies of the lessons were discursive and written instructions, particularly regarding fingering which proves a more dictatorial rather than a facilitative approach and outlined problems of self-directed learning (Roulston & Jutras, 2015; McMillan, 2011). Students reported that teachers generally relied on this style rather than using demonstration or modelling strategies for repertoire, technique or practice even though teachers had previously claimed they had.

This particularly led to confusion over practice, frustration in how to practice and what to practice. Students seemed to be given verbal instructions on what to do but not given instructions on the process nor provided visual/aural/kinaesthetic examples to follow to achieve the desired results. Without any evidence of demonstration or clearer explanation by the teachers, students figured out their own remedies including alternating speeds, going too fast too soon, not practicing at all, putting family priorities first, avoiding lessons, avoiding technical work, starting new pieces without informing the teacher and waiting for the teacher to work out fingering. Despite CS1's advocacy of slow practice to build accuracy and speed, CS3 seemed to understand by stating, "I am not sure how to achieve consistency. My teacher says slow practice and I am sure that is true but I am doing that and had expected to see more results". The following week he stated "I tried the Beethoven at full speed which is a bit beyond me but I think I will be able to do it if my technique can get some consistency at slower speeds"; yet the student "Practised at alternately slow and fast speeds the several tricky parts" and records that "I wish I knew why I play so much better some days and so much worse others. No obvious rhyme or reason". Obviously, he was impatient and not sticking to his teacher's advice long enough. Modelling and practice strategies by Kohut (1985) may have helped more so than discussion alone. At times, some teachers were also criticised for focusing on the details rather than the larger picture. Overall,

as examinations or video performances arose, practice increased and thus provided motivation for students to improve and could be used in the future.

Despite some students receiving practice schedules from their teachers, these adults required more didactic instruction at the outset to become more independent, specifically for practice techniques and fingering. Teachers therefore needed to know when to change from didactic to facilitative roles (McMillan, 2011; Shokheida, 2016). Motivation, reluctance and lack of confidence were some of the reasons outlined by CS6 who wrote, "Another missed lesson… and another week of no practicing. Different things going on at work/home…" Added to this, the student expressed, "I still struggle with my technique as it is not my favourite thing to do". Having an array of creative approaches, such as Kodaly, Orff, Suzuki and Dalcroze approaches, could be useful motivation to increase learning alongside strategies described by Bruckner (2008) and Kohut (1985), and consequently could engage students creatively in learning, provide time management, discovering the most important aspects to practice and leads to effective memorization.

Consequently, students felt they had made little improvement over the period due to practice being more difficult than they expected, a lack of effective practice strategies being demonstrated and lifestyle overload. The latter included family problems, accidents and injuries, jobs, travel and preparations for Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Students relayed their progress over five areas: Technique, fingering, preparation, sight reading, performance and coordination. The most improvements were for fingering (which teachers provided) and performance, which is directly related to correct fingering and a teacher's qualifications. The least improvements were found in coordination and technique followed closely by preparation and sight-reading and fingering equally.

Skills could be transferred between genres for the most part therefore expanding the students' knowledge and playing ability although CT4 found that CS6 "could not voice chords".

Teaching Materials for Adults

Repertoire selected mainly by these adults was used for a variety of events and occasions encapsulating different musical genres and styles of playing. A snapshot of repertoire that teachers and students chose during this short period included: examination repertoire and technical work, classical repertoire, popular and folk pieces for special events, family occasions (weddings and duets), seasonal pieces (Christmas, Halloween, Thanksgiving) and work related pieces (hymns, songs and war-time songs). Providing a variety of repertoire is motivating although sometimes too many pieces were covered at the same time causing overwhelming feelings for the students and frustration for the teachers. Most teachers did not use tutor books; considering the students' goals, the tutor books were not necessary. Only CS6 mentioned her teacher CT4 may have used a tutor book. However, they were useful for reference, additional repertoire and alternative arrangements. Students' hobbies, work, family background and personality provided a wealth of information and clues as to their interests. The Internet provided a plethora of repertoire but was not reported as being used. It became apparent that teachers needed to recognise when

students should move forward in their learning or consolidate their current stage. There were many opportunities to provide a variety of simpler repertoire or parts thereof to teach the same skill and in turn avoid boredom. This and review of previous repertoire in different arrangements were not employed. When pieces were not ready for video recording, students chose alternative easier pieces or arrangements to feel comfortable but without consulting the teacher. These included ensemble works (duets and accompanying) and older repertoire.

      With the analysis complete, the study was then able to provide some guidelines for the benefit of the teachers and their students.

GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING ADULTS

During exit interviews and final questions, teachers requested a set of guidelines for teaching adults, as they felt overwhelmed, inexperienced and frustrated. Following teacher and student outcomes, these suggestions are recommended to address the three research questions.

Existing Teaching Skills

Results indicated five emergent themes: a) performance related skills; b) personal skills; c) knowledge of teaching approaches; d) knowledge of the student's learning style; and finally e) teaching strategies.

      Performance related skills. The study outlined contrary opinions from teachers and students regarding performance and technical knowledge for adult students. Whilst teachers regarded these highly for demonstration purposes and diagnosis of problems, students were more interested in personality and teaching approaches, therefore possibly negating the need for postgraduate study in these areas and replacing it with greater andragogic skills, specifically if teaching was to be the main income. Echoing Marciano (1990), the teacher needs to explore adult learning theories and take responsibility for their own learning. Opportunities can be created and found within their community and online. It behoves them to demand additional learning if not provided by their local MTA and other providers. Using reflective practices (journals, videos, audio recordings, discussion and notes) proved an effective strategy in this study and other studies (see McMillan, 2011, 2016 and Perkins et al., 2015). Establishing the research group has been a positive step towards collegial connection and direct information acquisition.

      Personal skills. Positive attributes of adult students are well documented by Orlofsky (1997), Graessle (2000) and McMillan (2011). Knowles (1984) and Duke (2000) explained that the differences in teaching adult students as opposed to children demands care in communication and personal approach. The study outlined the successes and difficulties that arose for teachers, that ought to be improved by using more flexible facilitator roles, transforming from a dictatorial to a facilitative role as the student's skills mature, maintaining dictatorial roles for lesser developed

skills, acquiring a wider variety of teaching approaches, skills, strategies and understanding the student's learning style. Teachers were personable and communicative, using patience, empathy, encouragement, humour and listening, but needing greater investigative skills and authority to provide solutions for a student's practice difficulties or lack thereof. However, CT1 and CT4 sometimes evaded voicing their opinion rather than discouraging or upsetting the student. Teachers needed to be wary of personal agendas (CT3 and CT4) and find an approach that fits the individual rather than using one approach for all (CT4). Using a contract to set personal and professional boundaries was recommended to ensure both parties' (the student and the teacher) needs are met.

Knowledge of teaching approaches. The need for a review of teaching approaches was found in student journals and teacher reflections. These included adopting an interview format for prospective students particularly for clarity on goals, practice schedules and review. Discussion of goals, lifestyle and practice ability should be ongoing as discrepancies are noticed. Questioning techniques and discussion worked well but ought to be balanced with demonstration of techniques, practice and repertoire as suggested by Tait and Haack (1984) and Duke (2000). Teachers must be aware of what they say and do, as the teachers in this study were sometimes different. Investigating a wider variety of approaches from educational, pedagogic, psychological and creative philosophies is warranted for a student-centred approach and for teacher development.

Knowledge of the student's learning style. Pursuant to using an array of approaches to music education and piano pedagogy, teachers generally did not consider, or were in fact unaware of Bruckner's (2008) research. Therefore, the student's learning style in relation to teaching strategies was sometimes not compatible. These guidelines reinforce the need to continually upgrade skills and include recommendations to discover the student's learning style, discover their own learning/teaching style and preferences, examine if the teaching approaches utilised match the student's learning style and adapt teaching approaches as necessary to the student.

Teaching strategies. Teaching strategies for motivation and confidence were important factors for facilitating self-directed learning which students were clearly uneasy with. Recommended inclusions were: ensemble work, audio/visual equipment (posture, performance and practice), technology for research and recording (computer, iPad and phones), engaging students to work out their own fingering, demonstrating fingering patterns and other practice techniques and assigning a lesser number of pieces to those with high anxiety or busy lifestyles in order to favour improvement rather than achievement. Practice sections particularly needed monitoring during lessons involving smaller sections and slower speeds to ensure competence, mastery and confidence building. Clear precise instructions were required alongside a visit to the student's home to review posture, seating arrangements and a practice session if necessary. Demonstration of practice techniques was required both in isolation and within context. Demonstration of

repertoire was also required alongside discursive strategies. Discussion ought to include reference to both details and the bigger scenario so students understand the end value of current strategies.

Needs and Perceptions of Canadian studio piano teachers
All teachers expressed an interest in andragogic training despite their high qualifications, confirming the need for this training at the undergraduate and RCM teacher certificate levels. These guidelines were produced at the teachers' request providing immediate assistance where professional development and collegiate opportunities may take longer. Teachers indicated support was necessary for business practices (contracts, fees and boundaries), teaching approaches and strategies, how to teach adults differently than children and repertoire for adult students.

Needs and Perceptions of Adult Students
Students indicated a desire for flexibility, understanding and personable teachers rather than the current trend for high level performance and technical skills. As adults, they required incorporation of facilitative, self- paced learning and autonomy to select repertoire and performances. As students, they needed recognition as an individual (learning style and approach), direction for skill learning, demonstration of repertoire and practice skills, practice techniques, practice schedules, personal counselling and motivation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In answer to the main research question, results from all collected data identified an unregulated profession (Figure 1) without mandatory or minimum criteria in any identified theme, thereby teachers are free to operate without established criteria.

Firstly, the results indicated that the present Canadian infrastructure could support a nationally regulated profession (Figure 4) that provides accredited qualifications, minimum qualifications, mandatory registration and professional development, portability, certification, recognition of prior learning, links with the respective associations, the community, the national education system and professional business practices. The ensuing literature review provided concrete evidence of a hierarchical accreditation structure that led to further exploration of existing Canadian qualifications for piano teachers.

Secondly, studio piano teachers were identified as an autonomous industry that operated outside the given accreditation system but did utilise qualifications at varying levels. However, studio teachers have difficulty in teaching adults without proper pedagogical training, with accredited qualifications that were generally found to be performance-based, lacking in pedagogy and more specifically, lacking in andragogy. This contradiction then formed the basis for practical investigations,

which investigated the minor research questions as to the needs, expectations and attitudes of piano teachers and their adult students that clearly needed addressing.

Outcomes of the study provided evidence that piano teachers need to be updated in order to cater to adult learning, with educational philosophy, psychology, learning styles and business skills supporting a triangular approach (Figure 3). As the number of adult learners increases, the inclusion of andragogy, practical exposure and learning strategies becomes increasingly important. Especially imperative are professional development opportunities for those teachers with only performance training who have clearly struggled in this study. Educators are recommended to train musicians in several skills as outlined in the literature review and emergent themes of this study which were extrapolated from current practising professionals. It also outlined the difference between personal and professional teaching skills required for adult teaching, the differences in student and teacher expectations particularly in performance training, the need for less performance training and more pedagogy at an earlier stage for lifelong portfolio careers (see Gwatkin, 2008; Bennett, 2008; Perkins et. al, 2015), and finally, the need for improvement in professional development opportunities with the MTAs and public examination systems. As teachers in the 21st century, lifelong pedagogic learning ought to include international contacts established through the Internet, Skype, conferences, MTAs collaborative projects with teachers and online learning. Social media forums provide excellent advice but do not replace quality training.
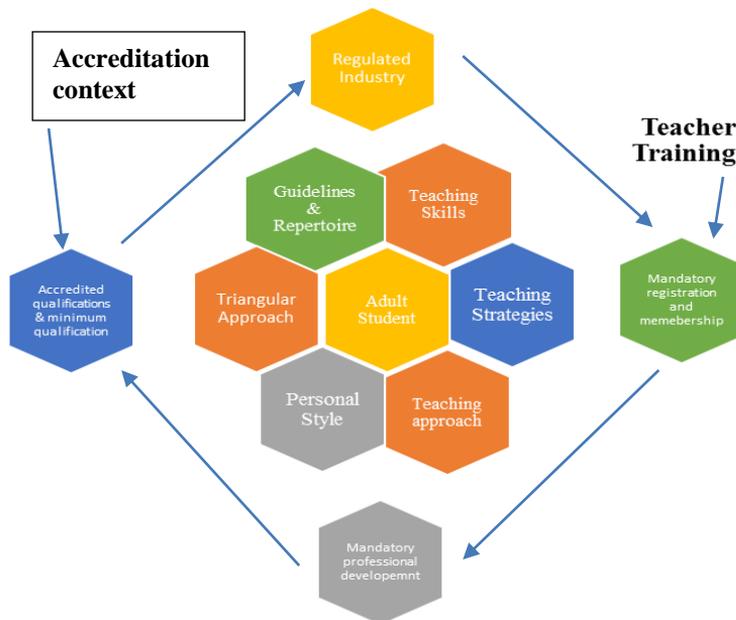

Figure 4 Proposed piano teacher training context and accreditation in Canada

The summary of all findings led to the development of set of guidelines for teaching adults and a final conceptual framework (Figure 4), whereby care has been taken to retain the perceived needs of teachers and adult students. It combines the suggestions of all findings in relation to accreditation, registration, qualifications, training and professional development on a national scale in Canada. The guidelines provide the greatest range of options for both studio piano teachers and the current industry without introducing a large proportion of new criteria.

CONCLUDING COMMENT

The benefits of teaching adults greatly expand and extend piano teachers' professional careers. In answer to the main questions of the study, these teachers provided for their students to the best of their abilities but acknowledged a deficit in andragogy that was sorely needed in teacher training. Results demonstrated that at any given level, adult students were not completely competent or independent as teachers may incorrectly assume and therefore required teachers to adopt a flexible humanistic approach, concurrent with varied strategies to nurture students towards personal and pianistic goals, promoting self-directed learning as they mature musically. Both teachers and students found the study to be a positive experience with effective communication as the most successful factor. The study proved the capabilities and viability of academic research to directly impact local teachers, their students and to inform future teacher training policies.

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BIOGRAPHY

Jan McMillan, PhD, was until recently (2012) a senior lecturer in piano pedagogy and performance at the Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia. Her doctoral thesis entitled *Investigating the viability of a National Accreditation system for Australian Piano Teachers* investigated accreditation, registration, training, and professional development. She is fully accredited in Suzuki and Orff Schulwerk philosophies and holds a Cert IV in Training and Assessment for the Vocational Education Sector. Her work to date has focused on creative methods of teaching and learning including improvisation, aural and sight reading to all age groups and abilities. Post doctoral research has focused on working with young adults and the mature aged in Malaysia, Canada and Australia. She remains an advocate of increasing the professional identity of studio teachers. She is currently based in Perth, Western Australia.