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PEDAGOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR ORGANIZING INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE CLUB ACTIVITIES IN GENERAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The article examines the pedagogical foundations of organizing instrumental ensemble clubs in general education schools. It reviews the regulatory and legal framework governing school ensembles and identifies the components of collective performance skills. The study discusses the phased organization of club sessions, criteria for repertoire selection, and assessment of performance skills. The analysis indicates that regulatory documents have established the necessary conditions for school ensembles; however, a comprehensive scientific and methodological framework for supporting their activities has not yet been sufficiently developed.

Keywords: Instrumental ensemble, extracurricular club, collective performance skills, musical culture, repertoire, "Iqtidor" ensembles, assessment criteria, pedagogical conditions.

Introduction

In recent years, national policy has placed particular emphasis on music and arts education. Resolution No. PQ-112 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, dated February 2, 2022, introduced measures to teach students in general education schools to perform melodies on national musical instruments, establish practical extracurricular clubs to organize students' free time meaningfully, and require music teachers to demonstrate proficiency in playing national instruments [1]. This direction was further developed through Resolution No. PQ-391 of November 15, 2024. Under this resolution, "Iqtidor" amateur artistic ensembles

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were to be established in schools beginning April 1, 2025, and the national "Iqtidor School Ensemble" competition would be held annually [2; 3].

At a meeting with culture and arts professionals on June 1, 2026, instructions were issued to establish at least four music and arts clubs in every general education school [4; 5]. Subsequently, the Ministry of Preschool and School Education approved regulations governing the organization of these clubs [6]. Thus, a legal foundation has been established for school ensemble activities.

In practice, however, club leaders still need research-based answers to such questions as how to organize an ensemble, how to select repertoire, and how to develop and assess collective performance skills.

The purpose of this article is to explain the pedagogical foundations for organizing instrumental ensemble clubs in general education schools and to identify the main approaches to developing collective performance skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

In international music pedagogy, collective music-making is regarded as an important means of student development. Group singing occupies a central place in Zoltán Kodály's music education system, while Carl Orff's Schulwerk approach emphasizes collaborative performance in instrumental and rhythmic activities [7; 8]. D. B. Kabalevsky's program seeks to connect music with students' lives, whereas B. M. Teplov's research explores the psychological foundations of musical abilities [9; 10]. According to L. S. Vygotsky's theory, children develop through collaborative activity, which provides a theoretical basis for the pedagogical value of ensemble performance [11].

Studies by Uzbek researchers have addressed the development of students' musical outlook through national instrumental ensembles and the organizational structure of club sessions [12], methods of working with ensembles and learning musical compositions [15], and challenges in organizing folk instrument orchestras at children's music and arts schools [14]. However, these studies have mainly focused on specialized music and arts schools or individual instruments. The comprehensive organization of ensemble clubs and the assessment of collective performance skills in general education schools remain insufficiently studied.

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This study employed theoretical analysis of scientific and pedagogical literature and regulatory documents, comparative analysis, synthesis, and pedagogical modeling.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The pedagogical significance of ensemble performance

A distinctive feature of ensemble performance is that each student's result depends on the performance of the group as a whole. Therefore, in addition to instrumental playing skills, ensemble activity develops cooperation, responsibility, attentive listening, and teamwork. In solo performance, a student is mainly responsible for their own part; in an ensemble, each performer is also responsible for the overall harmony of the sound. This connects musical performance with social experience.

2. Components of collective performance skills

Collective performance skills differ from individual performance skills. Their components can be classified as follows (Table 1).

Table 1. Components of collective performance skills

Component	Description
Rhythmic and intonational coordination	Starting and finishing together, maintaining a steady tempo, and ensuring accurate intonation
Listening and aural awareness	Monitoring one's part in relation to others and sensing the overall ensemble sound
Dynamics and ensemble balance	Balancing instrumental sound, highlighting the leading voice, and providing accompaniment
Performance discipline	Following the leader's cues, preparing for rehearsals, and acting responsibly
Collaboration skills	Finding one's role within the group, providing mutual assistance, and working toward a shared outcome

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These components should be developed both separately and together during rehearsals. They are interconnected: for example, a student who has not developed attentive listening skills cannot achieve rhythmic and intonational coordination.

3. Pedagogical conditions for organizing club activities

The following conditions are necessary for an instrumental ensemble club to operate effectively at school.

First, ensemble membership should be determined with due consideration of students' ages, musical preparation, and interests. According to the ministry's regulations, club participants receive two hours of advanced instruction per week [6]; therefore, rational allocation of rehearsal time is essential.

Second, rehearsals should be organized in stages (Table 2).

Table 2. Stages of ensemble rehearsals

Stage	Main objective	Expected outcome
Preparation	Developing instrumental and rhythmic skills and introducing ensemble rules	Students can perform their own parts independently
Learning	Working on the composition section by section	The work is fully learned, with stable tempo and rhythm
Refinement	Working on ensemble cohesion, dynamics, and balance	The group listens to one another and performs cohesively
Stage performance	Preparing for competitions and concerts and developing stage etiquette	The group performs confidently and consistently on stage

Third, the repertoire should suit students' abilities and include works from both national and international musical traditions. The competition established under Resolution No. PQ-391 likewise includes national and international music categories [3]. Recommended repertoire selection criteria are technical suitability for students' abilities; artistic and educational value; the possibility of adapting parts to learners at different levels; compatibility with the available rehearsal time; and a balance between national and international music.

Fourth, teacher preparation is a decisive factor. Resolution No. PQ-112 introduced a requirement for music teachers to be proficient in playing national

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musical instruments [1], while children's music and arts schools were designated as supporting institutions providing methodological assistance to general education schools [13]. Nevertheless, a shortage of specialists has also been identified as a problem in children's music schools [14].

Fifth, the use of creative and interactive methods, such as sectional rehearsals, peer listening, and small-group practice, increases students' engagement [15].

4. Assessment and monitoring

Regular assessment is needed for the effective development of collective performance skills. This requires criteria aligned with the components of these skills and clearly defined levels of development. The author proposes the following three-level classification (Table 3).

Table 3. Levels of development of collective performance skills (proposed classification)

Level	Description
Low	The student focuses only on their own part, does not listen to others, and cannot maintain the tempo with the group
Medium	The student performs their own part confidently, attempts to listen to the ensemble, and follows the leader's cues but makes errors in balance and dynamics
High	The student maintains rhythmic and intonational coordination, monitors the overall sound, understands dynamics and balance, and collaborates actively within the ensemble

Assessment should cover both individual performance and the performance of the ensemble as a whole. When monitoring is continuous and formative, the teacher can track the progress of each student and the entire group and adjust the content of rehearsals in a timely manner. This is precisely where a gap in the literature is evident: assessment criteria are often designed for solo performance, while systems for evaluating collective performance skills remain underdeveloped.

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CONCLUSION

A school instrumental ensemble club is an effective means of developing students' musical performance culture. Resolutions No. PQ-112 and No. PQ-391, together with the ministry's regulations, have established a regulatory and legal foundation. The analysis identified five components of collective performance skills and recommended organizing rehearsals in four stages, applying repertoire selection criteria, and assessing performance skills at three levels.

At the same time, the proposed model for organizing club activities, the methodology for progressively developing collective performance skills, and the relevant assessment criteria need to be validated through experimental research. Addressing these issues will help establish ensemble performance in general education schools on a scientific basis and define directions for future research.

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