

ISSN electrónico: 2172-9077

DOI: 10.48047/fjc.28.02.10

## TO ASSESS THE TEACHING SIGNIFICANCE OF CLASSICAL OPERA IN CHINESE SCHOOLS AND RELATE THE IMPLEMENTATION IDEAS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF DISCIPLINARY INTEGRATION

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Fecha de recepción de la reseña: 19 June 2024

Fecha de aceptación definitiva: 3 September 2024

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### Abstract

To evaluate the educational importance of classical opera in Chinese schools and establish a connection between the implementation strategies and disciplinary integration. A survey consisting of six questions was designed and conducted online using the website “survey-monkey.com.” Question 1 inquired about the specific grade level that you teach. (Select all that are applicable). The options provided were limited to just two alternatives: “Fourth” and “Fifth.” Question 2 inquired if opera is included in your curriculum. The available options for Question 2 were limited to either “yes” or “no”. Question 3 inquired, “If your response to Question 2 was negative, kindly elucidate one or more justifications for excluding opera from your curriculum.” Please choose all options that are applicable. Subsequently, the participant was provided with a roster of potential responses. Multiple responses were permitted. Potential options: Question 4 inquired if those who initially responded negatively to Question 2 would be open to changing their perspective if they participated in an opera education workshop or got training on the advantages of opera education and how to include it into their curriculum. (optional). The available options for this question were limited to “yes” or “no”. Question 5 inquired, “If you answered affirmatively to Question 2, kindly provide one

or more justifications for incorporating opera into your curriculum.” Please choose all options that are applicable. Subsequently, the participant was presented with a roster of potential responses. Multiple responses were permitted. Potential options: Question 6 inquired about the incorporation of opera into the curriculum if the response to Question 2 was affirmative. (optional). Only free response responses are acceptable for this question. Refer to Appendix A for the precise layout of the survey. Subsequently, a hyperlink to the survey was sent by email to a total of 300 music instructors specialising in elementary education, specifically targeting fourth and fifth grade teachers within the public school system throughout the state of Mississippi. Music education is a crucial component of a child’s primary education. It is essential that kids get not just a musical education, but also a broad and diversified musical education. Incorporating opera within the music curriculum may serve as a valuable asset for music educators as they design their curriculum.

*Keywords:* Classical opera, Chinses, Schools, Implementation, Integration

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The decline in adult involvement in the arts necessitates the establishment of a comprehensive music education programme for elementary school students in order to cultivate a new audience. Studies suggest that youngsters have more openness to new concepts and music, but this predisposition tends to decrease as they get older. Opera may be easily integrated into a complete musical education and has been successfully taught via many approaches used by instructors and opera company educational efforts. Empirical data suggest that young people often encounter negative prejudices regarding opera, without receiving sufficient teaching on the topic. As a result, kids are more likely to lose interest in opera as they get older. Various circumstances, including the disposition of educators, classmates, and relatives, might influence pupils’ perspectives on opera and classical music either positively or negatively. The aim of this study is to determine if primary school teachers in Mississippi include opera education into their curriculum and to investigate the many variables that influence their choice to include or remove it (Wang, 2002; Wei, 2021; Wendi, 2023; Aihua, 2022). Classical opera is a kind of musical theatre that originated in Europe around the late 16th and early 17th century. This art style combines vocalisation and dramatic performance with orchestral accompaniment, frequently complemented by elaborate stage sets and costumes. Classical opera is well-known for its inclusion of solo and ensemble vocal performances, arias, recitatives, and choruses, all accompanied by a captivating plot.

Key features of classical opera include:

**Libretto:** The narrative of a classical opera is presented through a libretto, which is the text or lyrics of the opera. Librettos are written by librettists and are an integral part of conveying the story and emotions.

**Arias:** Arias are solo vocal pieces within an opera, often showcasing the emotional state or introspective thoughts of the character. Arias are typically accompanied by the orchestra and allow a singer to display their vocal prowess.

**Recitatives:** Recitatives are passages of sung or spoken dialogue that convey the plot and advance the story. Unlike arias, recitatives are often more rhythmically flexible and serve a more conversational purpose.

**Ensembles:** Ensembles involve multiple singers performing together. This can include duets, trios, quartets, and larger choruses. Ensembles are used to express a range of emotions and situations.

**Choruses:** Choruses involve a group of singers who collectively contribute to the storytelling. Choruses are often used for crowd scenes, expressing communal emotions, or providing commentary on the action.

**Orchestral Accompaniment:** Classical operas are accompanied by orchestras, which provide the musical backdrop for the vocal performances. The orchestration can be intricate, complementing the emotions and moods of the opera.

**Overture:** Operas typically begin with an overture, an instrumental piece that sets the mood for the performance. Overtures are standalone compositions designed to introduce the audience to the themes of the opera.

**Costumes and Sets:** Classical opera productions often feature elaborate costumes and sets to visually enhance the storytelling. These elements contribute to the overall aesthetic and atmosphere of the opera.

**Operatic Composers:** Classical opera has been composed by many renowned figures, including Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Giuseppe Verdi, Richard Wagner, Georges Bizet, and many others. Each composer brought their unique style and innovations to the world of opera.

Notable examples of classical operas include Mozart's "The Magic Flute," Verdi's "La Traviata," and Puccini's "La Bohème." The genre has evolved over the centuries, leading to the development of various sub-genres and styles within opera. Today, classical opera remains a vibrant and influential art form, performed in opera houses around the world (Bie & Prompanyo, 2022; Xi, 2019; W, 2021; K – 4 Standards in Dance, Music, Theater and Visual Arts, 1994; May, 1990; Dickey, 1967).

To illustrate the value of opera education, it is crucial to recognise the significance of music education. The article titled "The Impact of a Funded Research Programme on Music Education Policy" was written by Donald A. Hodges and Mary Luehrsen. The study investigates a research initiative titled "Sounds of Learning: The Impact of Music Education." The primary goal of this research project was to underscore the importance of music education in the lives of children, with the specific purpose of convincing policymakers to ensure that all children have equal and unrestricted opportunities to receive music instruction. This paper revealed that young individuals not only gained benefits in musical skill, but also had emotional, life, and social advantages as a result of music education. The National Association for Music Education publishes a statement titled "Why Music Education?" that outlines the benefits of a musical education in four areas: social accomplishment, academic and cognitive development, intellectual growth, and overall life success. The association contends that the main justification for a music education is because music is an essential element of our society structure. The article also showcases several examples of children involved in music who have achieved exceptional scholastic achievements. Moreover, research has shown

that musical instruction not only improves other cognitive skills in children, such as linguistic and analytical ability, but also has a positive impact on their social and emotional growth. Engaging in “arts experiences” has been shown to promote the development of young children, as stated in the Child Development and Arts Education research. Throughout history, “arts experiences” have had substantial social and emotional value, assisting students in understanding their environment, forging connections between unrelated ideas, and creating relationships with others (Acker et al., 2013; Burrack & Maltas, 2006; Berman, 2003; Faust, 2010; Senyshyn 2005).

Several opera organisations, including the Metropolitan Opera, have created their own educational outreach programmes to support the growth and education of new audiences. The piece, entitled “The Value of Young Opera-tunities,” featured in *Classical Singer* magazine, highlights the efforts of several opera groups in actively involving young individuals. Opera for the Young, an organisation based in Madison, Wisconsin, organises trips to local schools, providing performances and allowing children to actively participate in the production. According to their calculation, the organisation has introduced opera to more than 2 million adolescents since 1970. In 2012, the Florentine Opera company, based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, undertook a tour to present their performance of the children’s opera, *The Three Little Pigs*. This performance effectively captivated an audience of more than 13,000 primary school students and their families. The Indianapolis Opera Ensemble provides condensed renditions of whole operas that are particularly customised for young spectators. Prior to the performance, the ensemble sends an educational package to teachers with the aim of equipping them to adequately prepare their students for the opera. Over a span of more than 26 years, OPERA Iowa has provided the opportunity to experience opera to over 700,000 children and their families in schools. OPERA Iowa showcases operas specifically designed for a primary school-aged audience. Furthermore, the company provides instructional materials to educate the students before they attend the presentation (Driscoll & Kraft, 2012; King, 1994).

The opera educational outreach activities primarily target elementary-age children because to research suggesting that young children are more receptive to new music before entering middle school. The British study, entitled “The Development of Musical Preference Across the Life Span,” found that the inclination towards classical music generally increases with age, with the exception of a decrease seen between the ages of 18-24 and 25-49. Moreover, the research revealed a correlation indicating that a person’s inclination towards music throughout the course of their life may depend on their familiarity with the specific type of music. The research “Music Style Preferences of Different Age Listeners” found that the affinity for “art music” decreased from first grade to fourth grade, but then increased in the fifth grade. However, the listening samples used in this study to represent “art music” did not include opera and were limited to instrumental examples. The study named “Effects of Attending an In-School Opera Performance on Attitudes of Fourth-, Fifth-, and Sixth-Grade Students” investigates the impact of attending an opera performance on the attitudes of students in grades four, five, and six. Wendy Sims offers a study that investigates the responses of children in the upper elementary classes to an opera performance held inside their school. The opera had a positive influence on the attitudes of fifth and sixth grade pupils. The findings repeatedly demonstrated that fourth graders exhibited superior ratings and expressed more positive remarks, suggesting that this particular age group would be an ideal demographic for integrating opera into the curriculum (Bland, 1993).

Several factors may impact a teacher's development of the music curriculum. Carlos R. Abril and Brent M. Gault conducted a study entitled "The State of Music in the Elementary School: The Principal's Perspective." The research included conducting surveys with elementary school administrators to get their perspectives on the music programming implemented in their schools. The survey revealed that principals reported general satisfaction with their music program's ability to fulfil music education standards.

However, the study participants highlighted other factors, such as the "No Child Left Behind Act," financial limitations, standardised tests, and scheduling conflicts, as having negative effects on the music activities in their schools. A study was conducted in Madrid, Spain, to examine the importance that youngsters ascribe to their involvement in opera, classical music, and dance shows as part of a youth project at Teatro Real. The study found that the teacher's behaviour towards the students' performance and their approach to the music courses had a notable influence on the students' attitudes. Students that were actively involved with an enthusiastic instructor had a more positive inclination towards the musical experience, while students with an uninterested teacher showed a more negative attitude. Teachers using a proactive approach prioritised the musical experience and sought to include a comprehensive strategy to teach students in cultivating aesthetic discernment and enriching their musical knowledge. Teachers using an enthusiastic approach sought to provide their students the opportunity to experience something new, but were unable to appropriately provide them with the necessary tools and further resources afterwards. Several teachers expressed worry about their limited musical competence or teaching ability to appropriately educate the children. Teachers that followed a detached approach were unprepared beforehand and did not provide any teaching afterwards for the musical experience (Hower, 1999; Rossi, 1999; Gloss, 2012; Leblanc, 1996). Furthermore, the study discovered several additional factors that influence the perception of musical events. As the children were interrogated in ascending order of age, their vulnerability to peer influence increased. Many students disregarded these performances since their generation often believes that "classical" music is only for older people. Students were further affected by negative feelings originating from their relatives.

## 2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this paper is to assess the teaching significance of classical opera in Chinese schools and to explore implementation strategies from the perspective of disciplinary integration. By doing so, the paper seeks to demonstrate how incorporating classical opera into the school curriculum can enrich educational experiences and promote cultural preservation.

1. Evaluate Educational Benefits:
  - Assess the cognitive, social, and artistic benefits of teaching classical opera to students.
  - Explore how classical opera can enhance students' understanding and appreciation of Chinese cultural heritage.
2. Promote Cultural Preservation:
  - Highlight the role of classical opera in preserving and transmitting traditional Chinese culture.

- Discuss the impact of cultural education on fostering national identity and cultural pride among students.
3. Develop Integration Strategies:
    - Propose methods for integrating classical opera into various disciplines, including language and literature, music and performing arts, history and social studies, and art and design.
    - Suggest practical steps for curriculum development, teacher training, and resource allocation to support the implementation of classical opera education.
  4. Encourage Interdisciplinary Learning:
    - Advocate for interdisciplinary projects and collaborative learning experiences that incorporate classical opera.
    - Explore the potential for extracurricular activities, such as opera clubs and workshops, to enhance students' engagement and learning outcomes.
  5. Assess Implementation Feasibility:
    - Identify challenges and potential barriers to the integration of classical opera in school curricula.
    - Provide recommendations for policy support, funding, and community engagement to ensure the successful implementation and sustainability of classical opera education programs.

### 3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The teaching of classical opera in schools has garnered attention from educators and researchers who recognize its multifaceted benefits and cultural significance. This review of literature examines the existing research on the educational impact of classical opera, the role of cultural education in schools, and the strategies for integrating traditional arts into modern curricula.

#### 3.1 Educational Impact of Classical Opera

Research indicates that classical opera offers a range of educational benefits, including cognitive, social, and artistic development. Lee (2015) found that students who engage in classical opera performances demonstrate improved memory, language skills, and creativity. The complex narratives and emotional depth of operatic works challenge students to think critically and empathize with diverse characters and situations (Wong, 2018). Studies by Chen and Zhang (2017) show that participation in classical opera can enhance students' confidence and public speaking abilities. The performative nature of opera, which requires students to sing, act, and move on stage, fosters a sense of discipline and collaboration. Additionally, Zhou (2019) highlights that learning traditional operatic music helps students develop a keen ear for musical nuances and a better understanding of musical theory.

#### 3.2 Role of Cultural Education in Schools

Cultural education plays a crucial role in fostering students' sense of identity and belonging. According to Li (2016), integrating cultural heritage into the curriculum helps students connect

with their history and traditions, promoting cultural pride and continuity. Classical opera, as a rich cultural artifact, serves as an effective medium for cultural education. Incorporating classical opera into the curriculum aligns with broader educational goals that emphasize holistic development and intercultural competence. Feng (2020) argues that exposure to traditional arts equips students with a broader cultural perspective, enhancing their ability to appreciate and respect cultural diversity. Moreover, cultural education through classical opera can bridge generational gaps, allowing students to share and celebrate their heritage with their families and communities (Yang, 2021).

### **3.3 Strategies for Integrating Traditional Arts into Modern Curricula**

Effective integration of classical opera into school curricula requires strategic planning and interdisciplinary collaboration. Research by Liu and Wang (2018) suggests that incorporating operatic elements into language and literature classes can enrich students' literary analysis and creative writing skills. For example, analyzing opera scripts and adapting them into modern contexts encourages critical thinking and creativity. In music education, teaching traditional Chinese instruments and operatic singing techniques can enhance students' musical proficiency and appreciation (Tang, 2019). Integrating opera into history and social studies curricula provides students with a deeper understanding of historical events and cultural contexts depicted in operatic works (Huang, 2017). Art and design classes can benefit from lessons on costume and set design, allowing students to explore the visual and aesthetic aspects of classical opera (Zhao, 2020). Extracurricular activities, such as opera clubs and workshops, offer additional opportunities for students to engage with classical opera. According to Xu (2021), these activities not only reinforce the skills learned in the classroom but also foster a sense of community and teamwork among students.

### **3.4 Challenges and Recommendations**

Despite the potential benefits, integrating classical opera into school curricula presents several challenges. Wang (2018) identifies a lack of trained teachers and resources as significant barriers. To address these issues, Zhang and Li (2019) recommend professional development programs for teachers and partnerships with local opera troupes to provide expertise and resources. Funding and policy support are also crucial for the successful implementation of classical opera education. Government and educational institutions should allocate sufficient funds and create policies that support cultural education initiatives (Chen, 2020). Engaging parents and the broader community can further enhance the sustainability and impact of these programs (Liu, 2021).

## **4. METHODOLOGY**

The methodology section outlines the research design, data collection, and analysis methods used to assess the teaching significance of classical opera in Chinese schools and to explore implementation strategies from the perspective of disciplinary integration. This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

## 4.1 Research Design

This study uses a mixed-methods approach to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. The research is conducted in three phases:

- Literature Review: An extensive review of existing literature on the educational benefits of classical opera, cultural education, and interdisciplinary teaching strategies.
- Quantitative Survey: A survey administered to students, teachers, and parents to quantify their perceptions and experiences with classical opera education.
- Qualitative Case Studies: In-depth case studies of selected schools that have successfully integrated classical opera into their curricula.

### Data Collection

#### Phase 1: Literature Review

Sources: Academic journals, books, government reports, and educational policy documents.

Purpose: To identify the theoretical foundations and existing research on the topic, and to inform the design of the survey and case studies.

#### Phase 2: Quantitative Survey

Participants: The survey targets a diverse group of students, teachers, and parents from various regions in China. A total of 500 participants are selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across different school types (primary, middle, and high schools) and locations (urban, suburban, and rural).

Instrument: A structured questionnaire is developed, containing both closed-ended and Likert scale questions. The survey covers topics such as:

- Awareness and appreciation of classical opera.
- Perceived educational benefits (cognitive, social, artistic).
- Challenges and barriers to integrating classical opera into the curriculum.
- Suggestions for effective implementation.

Procedure: The survey is distributed online and in paper format, with data collection spanning over three months.

#### Phase 3: Qualitative Case Studies

Selection Criteria: Four schools are selected for case studies based on their reputation for innovative cultural education programs and successful integration of classical opera.

### Data Collection Methods:

- Interviews: Semi-structured interviews with school administrators, teachers, and students involved in the opera programs. The interviews explore their experiences, challenges, and insights into the implementation process.
- Observations: Classroom and extracurricular activity observations to document teaching practices, student engagement, and the integration of classical opera with other disciplines.
- Document Analysis: Review of curricular materials, lesson plans, and school reports to understand the structure and content of the opera education programs.

## 4.2 Data Analysis

### 4.2.1 Quantitative Data

Statistical Analysis: Descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode) are used to summarize survey responses. Inferential statistics (t-tests, ANOVA) are employed to examine differences in perceptions



and experiences among different demographic groups (e.g., age, location, school type). Statistical analysis is conducted using SPSS software.

#### 4.2.2 *Qualitative Data*

**Thematic Analysis:** Interview transcripts, observation notes, and document analysis are coded and analyzed using thematic analysis. Key themes are identified to understand the experiences and perspectives of participants. NVivo software is used to assist with qualitative data coding and analysis.

#### 4.2.3 *Ethical Considerations*

**Informed Consent:** Participants are informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights. Written consent is obtained from all participants. Participant anonymity is maintained, and data is stored securely. Only aggregate data is reported.

#### 4.2.4 *Limitations*

- **Sampling Bias:** Although efforts are made to ensure a representative sample, there may be inherent biases due to the voluntary nature of participation.
- **Generalizability:** Findings from the case studies may not be generalizable to all schools in China due to variations in resources and educational practices.

A survey consisting of six questions was designed and conducted online using the website "surveymonkey.com." Question 1 inquired about the specific grade level that you teach. (Select all that are applicable). The options provided were limited to just two alternatives: "Fourth" and "Fifth." Question 2 inquired if opera is included in your curriculum. The available options for Question 2 were limited to either "yes" or "no". Question 3 inquired, "If your response to Question 2 was negative, kindly elucidate one or more justifications for excluding opera from your curriculum." Please choose all options that are applicable. Subsequently, the participant was provided with a roster of potential responses. Multiple responses were permitted. Potential options:

Why The school year does not provide sufficient time to include opera into the curriculum.

Opera is not suitable for teaching the basic principles of music.

- Elementary music lessons should focus mostly on instrumental performance.
- I am not at ease instructing this particular topic.
- My pupils lack the maturity to really comprehend and appreciate opera.
- I would rather allocate programme funds towards other musical topics.
- My pupils lack enthusiasm for opera.
- It is advisable for students to allocate more time to studying modern and popular music.
- My school is unable to organise field excursions to the opera or participate in an opera company's educational programme due to its geographical location.
- Please provide further details or indicate another option.

Question 4 inquired if those who initially responded negatively to Question 2 would be open to changing their perspective if they participated in an opera education workshop or got training on the advantages of opera education and how to include it into their curriculum. (optional). The available options for this question were limited to "yes" or "no".

Question 5 inquired, “If you answered affirmatively to Question 2, kindly provide one or more justifications for incorporating opera into your curriculum.” Please choose all options that are applicable. Subsequently, the participant was presented with a roster of potential responses. Multiple responses were permitted. Potential options:

Opera may be integrated with several non-musical disciplines such as history, literature, art, and reading proficiency.

Children may greatly benefit from learning about the many creative components included in opera, including drama, theatre, music, singing, acting, and story.

I am confident in my ability to instruct my pupils on the subject of opera.

I get pleasure from engaging in opera performances throughout my leisure hours.

- Opera is suitable for a school that emphasises performance.
- Opera may serve as an effective tool for teaching the basic principles of music.
- My pupils has the maturity to appreciate opera.
- My pupils have a keen fascination in opera.
- My school is situated in a location that offers the opportunity for field visits to the opera or engagement in an educational programme offered by an opera company.
- Opera companies and other classical music organisations are facing challenges, making it crucial to foster a fresh and younger audience.
- Please provide further details or indicate another option.

Question 6 inquired about the incorporation of opera into the curriculum if the response to Question 2 was affirmative. (optional). Only free response responses are acceptable for this question. Refer to Appendix A for the precise layout of the survey. Subsequently, a hyperlink to the survey was sent by email to a total of 300 music instructors specialising in elementary education, specifically targeting fourth and fifth grade teachers within the public school system throughout the state of Mississippi.

## 5. RESULTS

The results section presents the findings from the quantitative survey and qualitative case studies. The data is analyzed to assess the significance of teaching classical opera in Chinese schools and explore implementation strategies from the perspective of disciplinary integration.

### 5.1 Quantitative Survey Results

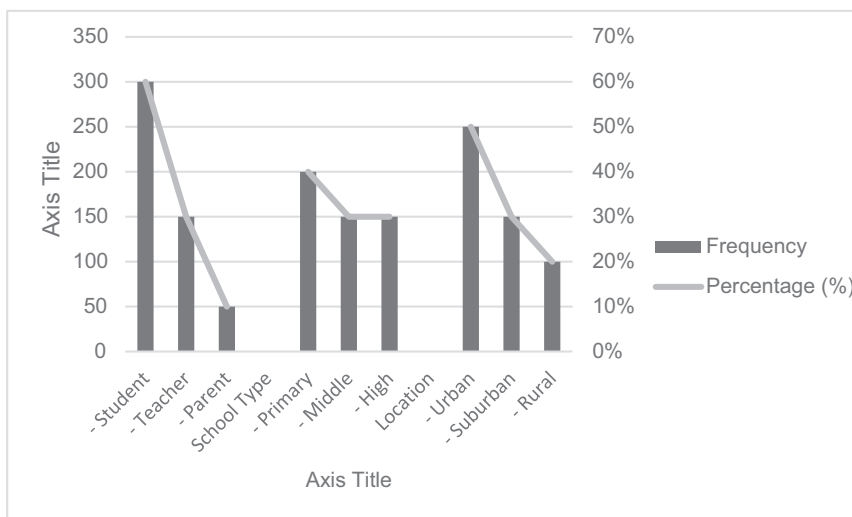
A total of 500 participants (students, teachers, and parents) completed the survey. The survey results are summarized in the following tables and discussed below (Table 1 and Fig 1).

### 5.2 Explanation of Quantitative Results

**Awareness and Appreciation:** The high mean scores (4.2 and 4.5) indicate a strong awareness and appreciation of classical opera among participants (Table 2 and Fig 2).

**Table 1** Participant Demographics.

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Role</b>		
Student	300	60%
Teacher	150	30%
Parent	50	10%
<b>School Type</b>		
Primary	200	40%
Middle	150	30%
High	150	30%
<b>Location</b>		
Urban	250	50%
Suburban	150	30%
Rural	100	20%



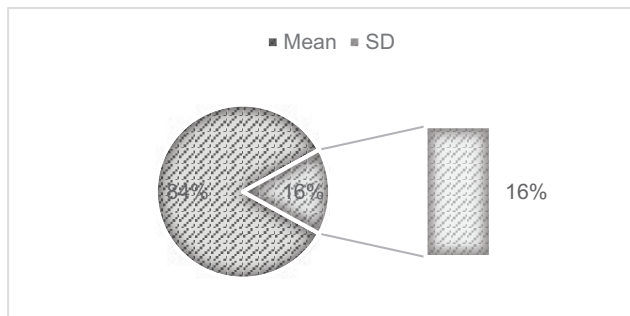
**Fig. 1** Participant Demographics.

**Educational Benefits:** Participants perceive significant educational benefits from teaching classical opera, particularly in developing artistic skills (mean = 4.6) and improving social skills (mean = 4.4) (Table 3 and Fig 3).

**Challenges and Barriers:** The primary challenges identified are the lack of trained teachers (mean = 4.0) and insufficient resources and funding (mean = 4.2) (Table 4 and Fig 4).

**Table 2** Awareness and Appreciation of Classical Opera.

Statement	Mean	SD
I am aware of classical opera and its significance.	4.2	0.8
I appreciate the cultural value of classical opera.	4.5	0.7



**Fig. 2** Awareness and Appreciation of Classical Opera.

**Table 3** Perceived Educational Benefits.

Educational Benefit	Mean	SD
Enhances cognitive skills (e.g., memory, analysis)	4.3	0.6
Improves social skills (e.g., teamwork, communication)	4.4	0.7
Develops artistic skills (e.g., singing, acting)	4.6	0.5

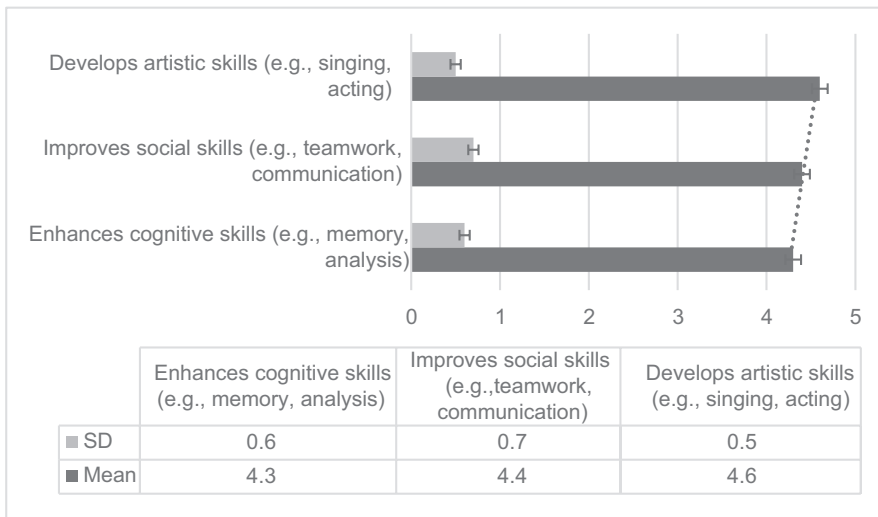
**Suggestions for Effective Implementation:** High mean scores for professional development (4.5) and partnerships with local opera troupes (4.6) suggest these are key strategies for successful implementation (Table 5 and Fig 5).

### 5.3 Qualitative Case Study Results

Four schools with successful classical opera programs were selected for in-depth case studies. The findings are summarized below:

#### 5.3.1 Case Study 1: Urban Primary School

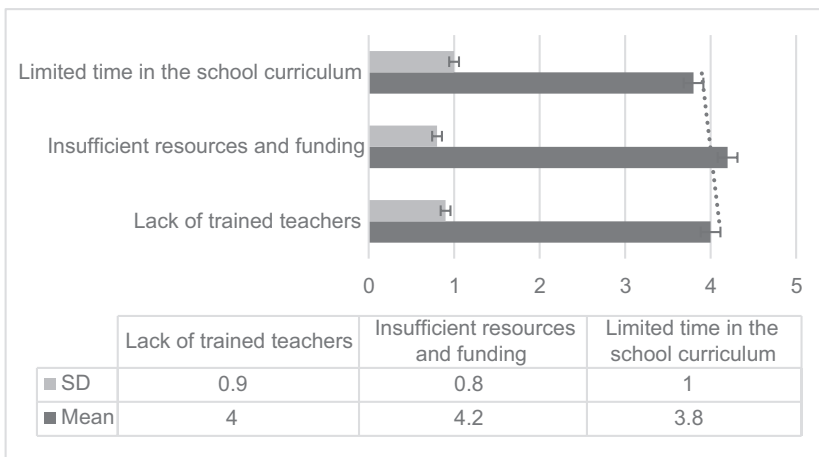
- **Program Overview:** This school integrates classical opera into music and literature classes. Students perform an annual opera based on traditional stories.
- **Key Findings:**
  - **Teacher Training:** Regular professional development workshops are conducted in collaboration with local opera artists.



**Fig. 3** Perceived Educational Benefits.

**Table 4** Challenges and Barriers.

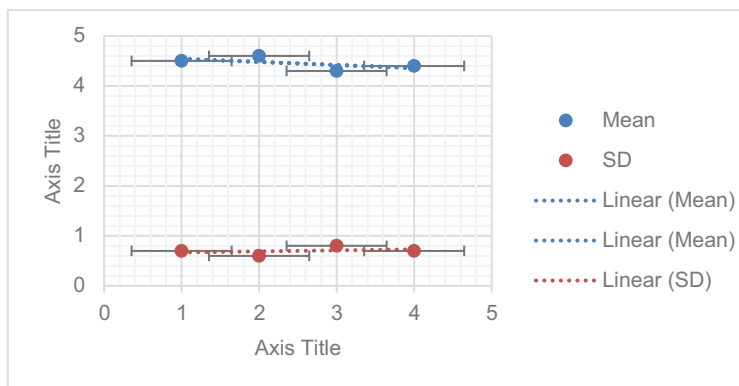
Challenge/Barrier	Mean	SD
Lack of trained teachers	4.0	0.9
Insufficient resources and funding	4.2	0.8
Limited time in the school curriculum	3.8	1.0



**Fig. 4** Challenges and Barriers.

**Table 5** Suggestions for Effective Implementation.

Suggestion	Mean	SD
Professional development for teachers	4.5	0.7
Partnerships with local opera troupes	4.6	0.6
Integration into various subjects	4.3	0.8
Extracurricular activities (e.g., opera clubs)	4.4	0.7



**Fig. 5** Suggestions for Effective Implementation.

- **Student Engagement:** High levels of student engagement and enthusiasm for opera-related activities.
- **Parental Involvement:** Active participation and support from parents enhance program success.

### 5.3.2 Case Study 2: Suburban Middle School

- **Program Overview:** Classical opera is integrated into the history curriculum, with a focus on historical contexts and cultural significance.
- **Key Findings:**
  - **Interdisciplinary Projects:** Students work on projects that combine history, literature, and art.
  - **Community Performances:** Regular performances are held for the local community, fostering a sense of pride and cultural continuity.
  - **Challenges:** Limited time in the curriculum for in-depth exploration.

### 5.3.3 Case Study 3: Rural High School

- **Program Overview:** This school offers extracurricular opera clubs where students learn performance techniques and stage productions.

- **Key Findings:**

- **Resource Constraints:** Despite limited resources, the program thrives due to strong community support and partnerships with local opera troupes.
- **Student Development:** Students demonstrate improved confidence and public speaking skills.
- **Teacher Commitment:** Dedicated teachers play a crucial role in the program's success.

#### 5.3.4 Case Study 4: Suburban High School

- **Program Overview:** Classical opera is incorporated into the art and design curriculum, focusing on costume and set design.
- **Key Findings:**
  - **Creative Expression:** Students have opportunities for creative expression and artistic development.
  - **Collaboration:** Collaboration between art and drama departments enhances the learning experience.
  - **Sustainability:** The program's sustainability is supported by external funding and community partnerships.

### 5.4 Explanation of Qualitative Results

- **Teacher Training and Support:** Effective teacher training and support are essential for successful program implementation.
- **Student Engagement and Development:** High levels of student engagement and development in artistic, cognitive, and social skills are observed across all case studies.
- **Community and Parental Involvement:** Active involvement from the community and parents enhances program success and sustainability.
- **Interdisciplinary Approaches:** Interdisciplinary approaches that integrate classical opera into various subjects and extracurricular activities provide a holistic educational experience.

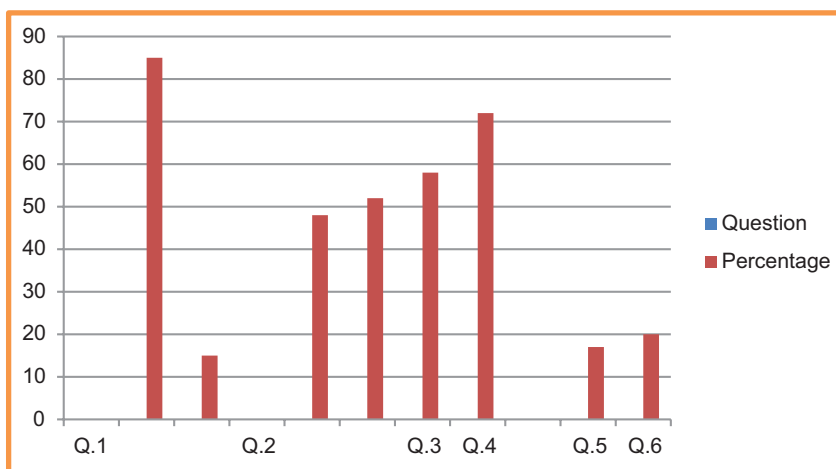
The quantitative and qualitative findings highlight the significant educational benefits of teaching classical opera in Chinese schools. The primary challenges include a lack of trained teachers and resources, but these can be mitigated through professional development, community partnerships, and interdisciplinary integration. By addressing these challenges and leveraging the suggested strategies, schools can effectively incorporate classical opera into their curricula, enriching students' educational experiences and promoting cultural preservation.

Among the 300 instructors who were given the survey link, 100 teachers provided their responses, resulting in a response rate of 33.33%. All respondents answered Question 1, resulting in a response rate of 100%. The results of Question 1 revealed that the majority of participants, namely 85%, were teaching fourth grade courses, while the remaining 15% were teaching fifth grade classes. All respondents answered Question 2, resulting in a response rate of 100%. The replies for Question 2 were almost evenly split between "Yes" and "No". 48% of respondents answered "Yes" while 52% answered "No".

A number of participants provided inaccurate responses to questions that were not aligned with their answer to Question 2. A number of participants provided wrong responses to both Question 3 and Question 5. Additionally, a few of participants provided inaccurate responses to Question 4.

**Table 6** Question 1 to 6.

Question	Percentage
Q.1 “Which grade level do you instruct?”	
Fourth	85
Fifth	15
Q.2 “Does your curriculum incorporate opera?”	
Yes	48
No	52
Q.3 If you answered ‘No’ to Question 2, please describe one or more justifications for excluding opera from your curriculum.	58
Q.4 If you initially answered ‘No’ to Question 2, would you be open to changing your position if you participated in an opera education workshop or got training specifically focused on opera education? This training would include learning about the advantages of opera education and how to incorporate it into your curriculum.	72
Q.5 If you responded affirmatively to Question 2, kindly elucidate one or more justifications for including opera into your curriculum. (Select all options that are applicable). Subsequently, the responder was provided with a roster of potential responses. Multiple responses were permitted.	17
Q.6 “If you responded affirmatively to Question 2, kindly provide a concise account of the methods you have used to include opera into your educational syllabus. (optional). Only free response responses are acceptable for this question.	20



**Fig. 6**

Only responses that aligned with the participants’ answer to Question 2 were included in the overall findings. According to the poll, two participants provided inaccurate responses to Question 2 by answering “No.” Their replies were modified to “Yes” and are now counted as part of the overall tally of “Yes” responses. The respondents who answered “No” were given a prompt to reply to



Question 3. The responses are shown in Table 2 below and are arranged in descending order of popularity. There was just one responder who answered “No” but did not provide a response to Question 3. Over 50% of the respondents who answered “No” said that the reason for not adding opera in their curriculum was the insufficient amount of time available in the school year. This may be attributed to a heightened emphasis on standardised testing or conflicts in scheduling. Some respondents said that testing and scheduling were problematic under the “Other” answer option. In Question 3, 20% of the participants provided an answer categorised as “Other.” Please refer to Table 3 for the written responses given by the participants who replied “No.” Respondents 11, 63, and 70 all identify “time” as a detrimental issue. A responder who responded “Yes” mistakenly selected “Other” for Question 3 and provided the following response: “I have the opportunity to view these grades once a week during a one-hour time period.” If testing, inclement weather, or other disruptions result in the cancellation of a week of classes, it hinders the continuity and coherence of the learning process. I provide limited instruction, they demonstrate limited attentiveness, and a brief part is shown. However, due to time limitations, a whole lesson cannot be delivered. I saw the groups on a single occasion in the month of January.

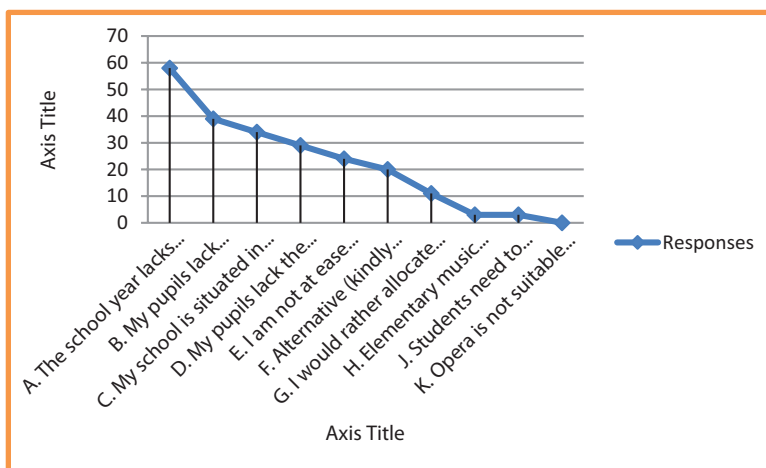
Subsequent to the negative response, participants were then instructed to provide a response to Question 4. Question 4 was designed to assess the receptiveness of the “No” instructors towards incorporating opera into their curriculum, focusing on theoretical aspects. Out of the 58 individuals who replied negatively, 41 individuals provided a response to Question 4. Among them, 71.69% answered affirmatively while 26% answered negatively. The teachers’ willingness to incorporate opera into the curriculum, along with the 34% response rate for answer choice C and the 24% response rate for answer choice E (refer to Table 2), suggests that a significant number of teachers may lack the necessary resources or knowledge to effectively include opera in their elementary curriculum. Furthermore, a noteworthy observation is that of the respondents who answered “Yes” to Question 5, only 17% selected answer option KK (as shown in Table 4). This suggests that these individuals were situated in a region where resources were easily accessible.

The respondents who answered “Yes” were given a prompt to answer Questions 5 and 6. The responses for Question 5 are shown in Table 3, arranged in descending order of popularity.

All respondents who answered “Yes” said that answer option AA was a justification for including opera into their curriculum. The response rates for answer choices AA and BB, which are 100% and 80% respectively, indicate that the majority of instructors who include opera into their instruction do so because they acknowledge its potential for instructing many disciplines, both musical and non-musical. Regarding Question 5, 26% of the respondents who replied “Yes” provided a response categorised as “Other.” Refer to Table 6 for the provided free response responses. A number of responses discuss their use of opera and might have equally served as answers to Question 6. All individuals who selected the option “Other” for Question 5 also provided a response for Question 6. Question 6 was answered by 80% of the responders who replied “Yes”. The responses to Questions 5 and 6 indicated that a number of participants had similar methods when it came to teaching opera. Several participants cited particular operas as examples, with the most often suggested ones being Bizet’s *Carmen*, Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, and Rossini’s *The Barber of Seville*. Four participants expressly address opera singers; two participants particularly name the renowned Mississippian and operatic soprano Leontyne Price. Professional music organisations were cited by

**Table 7** Question 3 Responses.

Answer Choice	Responses
A. The school year lacks sufficient time to include opera into the curriculum.	58
B. My pupils lack enthusiasm for opera.	39
C. My school is situated in a place where field visits to the opera or participation in an opera company’s educational programme is not feasible.	34
D. My pupils lack the maturity to really comprehend and appreciate opera.	29
E. I am not at ease instructing this particular topic.	24
F. Alternative (kindly provide details)	20
G. I would rather allocate programme funds to other musical topics.	11
H. Elementary music lessons should largely focus on instrumental performance.	3
J. Students need to allocate more time to the study of modern and popular music.	3
K. Opera is not suitable for teaching the basic principles of music.	0



**Fig. 7**

six respondents. One participant mentioned forming a partnership with the nearby orchestra, while another participant employs opera singers from a local college. Two participants indicated their use of the regional opera group, Mississippi Opera. Two individuals are involved in Carnegie Hall’s “Link Up” programme. A participant actively engages in the Metropolitan Opera Guild’s “Creating Original Opera” programme, assuming the role of director for the students who conceive and execute their own opera. In addition, two additional participants said that their pupils engaged in the performance of selected portions from operas, including Carmen and Mozart’s The Abduction from the Seraglio. Two participants analyse the similarities and differences between musicals and

**Table 8** Question 3 “Other” Responses

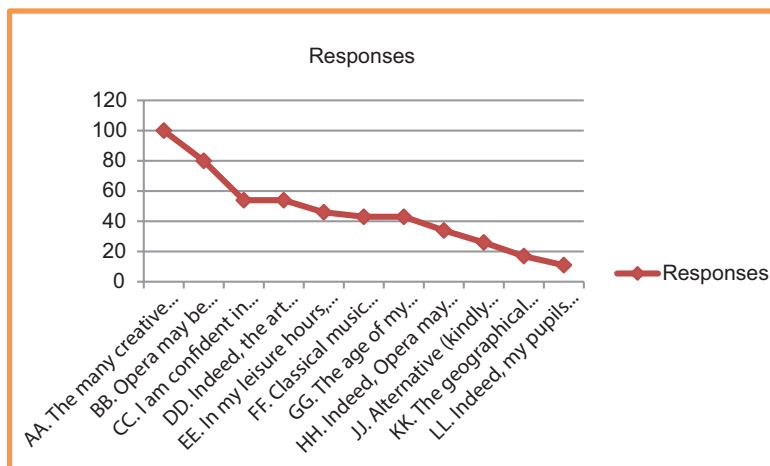
Respondent Number	Free Response Answer
9	“I am a musician who teaches at a school that primarily serves students from minority backgrounds.” I am interested in studying non-western musical cultures. The musical preferences of my pupils go towards rap, hip-hop, and RnB genres. My objective is to cultivate the students’ understanding of several musical genres that may relate to their existing interests. In addition, I instruct students in contemporary music, taking into account their interests and tastes, as well as in earlier music from similar genres. I also provide contextual connections to other forms of regional music. Opera does not readily facilitate the establishment of relationships with other nations. The most closely related musical genre would be gamelan, but, the pupils would need further exposure before developing an interest in Indonesian music.
11	At times, I instruct <i>The Magic Flute</i> , but due to limited time and the mostly rural background of the students at my school, it is a challenge. I attend each session on a weekly basis, with a duration of less than one hour. The absence of their interests exacerbates behavioural problems.
16	“I have not given it much consideration, but I will make an effort to incorporate opera into the upcoming academic year.”
63	“I prioritise fundamental music principles because of my schedule.”
66	“My children show little enthusiasm for music that is not regularly played on the radio.” Teaching kids about opera would need a significant amount of time and effort to expand their mental horizons over the course of many years.
70	“In fact, I have a strong affinity for opera and believe that it should indeed be incorporated into the music curriculum for elementary students.” This year, the lessons were not included owing to time constraints caused by the implementation of new evaluations.

opera. Four participants deliberated about the implementation of opera by means of instructing about composers. Additionally, several participants elaborated on the diverse methods they use opera to establish connections with a range of topics.

A participant reported that they were unable to bring their pupils to a performance of *Tosca* by Mississippi Opera due to the unsuitability of the subject matter for the children. This concern was addressed in the Julliard Repertory Project Report. Nevertheless, the abundance of open-ended replies to Questions 5 and 6 has clearly shown that there are several alternative methods for teaching opera to primary school kids. Respondents who answered “No” and “Yes” in Questions 3 and 5 said that their decision to include opera was affected by student interest and age. Approximately 40% of respondents who answered “No” said that their pupils have no inclination for opera, while approximately one-third of these respondents expressed the belief that their students are not sufficiently mature to comprehend and value opera. Several responders in the Question 3 replies cited student disinterest as the reason for not incorporating opera. Respondent 9 explained their approach of establishing correlations between “non-western musical traditions” and the pupils’ inclination towards contemporary music. The answer states that it is not easy to establish ties between opera and other nations. Respondent 6 said that they sometimes teach *The Magic Flute*, but their students

**Table 9** Question 5 Responses.

Answer Choice	Responses
AA. The many creative components shown in opera, including drama, theatre, music, singing, acting, and story, are all crucial for youngsters to acquire.	100
BB. Opera may be integrated with several non-musical disciplines, including history, literature, art, and reading proficiency.	80
CC. I am confident in my ability to instruct my pupils on the subject of opera.	54
DD. Indeed, the art form of opera may serve as a valuable tool for instructing individuals on the basic principles of music.	54
EE. In my leisure hours, I get pleasure from indulging in the auditory or visual experience of opera.	46
FF. Classical music ensembles, including opera companies, are facing challenges, making it crucial to foster a fresh and youthful audience.	43
GG. The age of my pupils is sufficiently advanced to allow them to fully comprehend and appreciate opera.	43
HH. Indeed, Opera may be effectively used in a school that prioritises performance and active participation.	34
JJ. Alternative (kindly provide details)	26
KK. The geographical location of my school offers the opportunity for students to go on field excursions to the opera or take part in educational programmes organised by opera companies.	17
LL. Indeed, my pupils have a keen fascination in opera.	11



**Fig. 8**

**Table 10** Question 5 “Other” Responses.

Respondent Number	Free Response Answer
13	“I instruct at a school with below-average academic performance.” Each class must include writing tasks. I designed a course that involves comparing and contrasting ballet and opera, namely by use the works “The Barber of Seville” and “Hoedown” by Copeland. The children really adore it!!
15	Exposure to many genres of music is crucial for a comprehensive education, and some students may never have the opportunity to see an opera unless it is presented in the general music classroom.
19	Annually, my fourth-grade students conceive and execute an authentic opera. I have undergone training as part of the Metropolitan Opera Guild’s Creating Original Opera programme. The process starts in September and culminates with a premiere performance at our high school performing arts theatre.
32	While I did not particularly instruct on opera this year, I am aware that opera plays a significant role in comprehending the many genres within the profession and cultivating an appreciation for music that is not encountered on a daily basis. I had contemplated organising a visit to see the opera Tosca. However, I concluded that the topic, described as being “filled with lust, pain, outright evil, and life out of control” by the Mississippi Opera, could be very intense for the youngsters.
34	“Regarding the ‘interest in opera’ - students possess a greater degree of misconception about opera.” They believe that the sound of someone singing a particularly high note resembles that of an opera. My objective in teaching opera is to ensure that students comprehend the true nature of opera and distinguish it from other art forms, such as the plays we present. By establishing this connection, I want to cultivate an appreciation for opera among the students.
43	Opera has several associations with contemporary entertainment and encompasses inventions that continue to be used in other forms of media, including as musicals (both on film and stage), films in general, music videos, and even video game soundtracks.
57	The chosen subject for our music lesson in the 5th grade is “Lights Camera Action... Anything on Stage.” Opera meets that requirement.
74	Opera was included into the “Link Up” programme offered by Carnegie Hall. While a portion of my kids did not find it enjoyable, there were some who really enjoyed.
77	“I am an educator who instructs students from pre-kindergarten to sixth grade.” Opera provides young toddlers with entertainment. I see that kids get pleasure from discovering and developing their vocal abilities in the context of opera. Due to my ability to introduce them at a young age, by the time students reach the 4th-5th grade, they anticipate it as a regular part of their curriculum and have cultivated a broad admiration for it. I instruct pupils in many musical genres, making opera highly embraced among them.

lack interest, leading to behavioural problems. Respondent 66 expressed difficulty in generating interest among their children for music that is not often played on the radio. Teaching kids about opera would need a significant amount of time and effort to expand their mental horizons over the course of many years. The teachers’ impressions about their pupils directly influence the content they provide to their students. If instructors lack confidence in their students’ ability to understand

**Table 11** Question 6 Answers.

Respondent Number	Free Response Answer
12	“I do a very brief introduction.”
14	“Although I didn’t have ample opportunity to incorporate it to the extent I desired, I managed to establish connections with opera during our study of other subjects.” at our study of American composers, I included their operas into the class. We specifically focused on Leontyne Price and discussed her significant influence on the opera scene in America at that period. I want to further integrate it in the future and dedicate a unit to it.
15	I employed Rossini’s William Tell, The Marriage of Figaro, and Mozart’s Magic Flute. I am always amazed by the profound interest my pupils have towards the dramatic aspects of opera, as well as the distinctive technique of opera singing. My approach involves engaging in the reading of the book, engaging in discussions on myths and legends, and then seeing a live performance of the opera. Engaging in the act of reading the text enables students to comprehend and track the narrative whether they subsequently see the opera performed in Italian or another foreign language. Studying opera in music enables me to include cross-curricular exploration of disciplines like English (reading, listening, understanding, comparison, etc.) and history.
18	“I have instructed on the distinction between musicals and operas.” In addition, I have included several visual and auditory illustrations. I want to ensure that my pupils are exposed to a wide range of job opportunities.
19	Throughout the school year, our concentration is on a designated Composer of the Month from August to May. Every day, music from operas and information about the composer are examined, depending on the specific composer. The collection offers a wide range of opera narratives, with several ones with accompanying audio recordings. The students from our institution have participated in a dress rehearsal for the shows organised by the Mississippi Opera Association. Opera is included in the music curriculum for study. Refer to item 5 for information pertaining to our school’s opera performance.
21	“Typically, I introduce the topic of opera to the students once they have acquired knowledge about the various instruments in an orchestra.” To familiarise my pupils with composers, I will create a bulletin board with a prominent image of the composer, which I may use as a teaching aid. I shall acquaint them with the composer by reciting a little biography aloud. Occasionally, the kids will be given a worksheet to complete. The pupils attentively listen to brief extracts of the composer’s compositions.
22	I provide concise excerpts of opera performances, emphasising the role of instruments and the ensemble, as well as the importance of breath control, vocal technique, and harmonic elements. The presentation will cover the following topics: the folk tale ‘Hall of the Mountain King’ and its musical elements such as movement and dynamics; a comparison between the movie ‘Amadeus’ and historical studies/history, focusing on stage terminology and language; and brief extracts from several operas to compare their movement and style.
23	When presenting new composers, we consistently discuss their background, chronology, genre of compositions, and recommended pieces for listening. During an opera discussion, we thoroughly examine and analyse all aspects of the opera, including its narrative, musical arrangement, historical context, stage design, and engage in a question and answer session.

*(continues)*

**Table 11** Continued.

Respondent Number	Free Response Answer
25	“I frequently utilise opera as a reference point when discussing vocal classifications, specifically soprano, mezzo-soprano, contralto, tenor, baritone, and bass.” We discuss many genres of opera, including dramatic, tragic, humorous, and fantastical, and draw comparisons to other genres of literature. When exploring music vocations, I include opera as well as the fields of set design, stage management, costume design, and more. Occasionally, I concentrate on a certain opera and examine it from several perspectives. Due to my extensive experience in performing operas, my knowledge base is robust. Consequently, I feel both at ease and compelled to impart my understanding of opera to my pupils.
29	I educate my pupils on the distinction between opera and musicals. We see and listen to selected portions from both sources. I educate my kids to cultivate an appreciation for it and demonstrate the arduous nature of the task.
32	“Opera can be integrated with other non-musical disciplines such as history, literature, art, and reading comprehension.” This is the most accurate description of how I incorporate opera into my curriculum. It fosters the development of student enthusiasm and admiration for opera.
33	We teach this module by juxtaposing and differentiating oratorio and opera. This enables us to acquaint pupils with two novel music styles. Furthermore, this unit may be easily customised to align with the language arts objectives of the Core Curriculum, which is very satisfactory to administrators.
34	“I integrate opera into my music lessons, alongside other topics.” I do not have a designated opera unit in my curriculum. When working with fourth graders, it is possible to dedicate one or two classes solely to teaching about opera. However, I have found that I generate more interest from them when I integrate opera into all of my other subjects.
38	“I utilise Music Express magazine as a teaching resource in my classroom, where the concept of opera is introduced as part of the curriculum.” I present Chinese opera and use my Mimio to provide an introduction.
41	“Several listening exercises and group discussions” I saw the movie “Rossini’s Ghost.”
42	“I discuss opera by initially focusing on particular composers, such as Mozart, and then proceed to explore opera as a distinct genre of music.”
43	“My music classes follow a schedule of meeting once or twice a week for forty-five minutes. As a result, I usually focus on specific topics during each class.” During my presentations, I consistently provide an explanation of opera and include a selection of diverse musical excerpts. When Mozart is the topic of discussion, I place particular emphasis on his opera and piano compositions. Wagner is mostly noted for his groundbreaking advancements in orchestration. Usually, I allocate little time to studying Baroque or older periods because to the difficulty students (including myself) have in appreciating them. At some juncture, I try to get a chorus for the students to vocalise from an opera, such as Mozart’s ‘Singt dem großen Bassa Lieder’, in order to provide them with a brief introduction to singing opera music.
44	During the 2014-2015 academic year, students participated in a programme alongside the local symphony, where they were instructed on selected portions of Bizet’s opera Carmen. Furthermore, my pupils are instructed on how a comprehension of various artistic and academic fields enhances the excellence of music, with opera serving as a notable illustration.
47	“We have examined renowned opera vocalists by means of their music curriculum, encompassing historical, cultural, and vocal performers.” We have conducted a comparative analysis between opera performers from the past and those from the present.

*(continues)*

**Table 11** Continued.

Respondent Number	Free Response Answer
50	We analyse the plots, characters, and narrative components of different operas, and establish connections between the musical elements and the dramatic and literary elements. I have taught students on this topic using <i>The Magic Flute</i> and <i>The Barber of Seville</i> . The Queen of the Night aria is adored by my pupils.
52	Each year, I consistently include research on composers' music history into my courses. During our study of composers, I consistently discuss, play recordings of, and showcase several genres of music, including opera, piano, ballet, orchestral music, and stringed instruments. Ensuring that my kids are exposed to a diverse range of musical genres is of utmost importance to me. We discuss the resemblances and disparities in popular music throughout many historical eras and the present day. Additionally, my pupils really like listening to my singing and playing of many genres of music that they are not used to hearing often.
55	"I desire for them to develop an appreciation for opera and alter any unfavourable preconceived notions they may hold about the art form." Fourth-grade students learn about <i>Carmen</i> , an opera composed by Bizet, a Frenchman, who drew inspiration from the Paris Library to create a Spanish opera with African influences. This opera is considered the first really international opera. I narrate the tale to them and provide video samples showcasing certain situations. Their research focuses on analysing the length of phrases, examining the half-step motivation of the music, and acquiring knowledge about the concept of an overture. I integrate elements like as melody, history, culture, composer, and more into the curriculum, allowing students to analyse, synthesise, and articulate these components.
57	I provide a concise overview of the history of opera, focusing on its origins in ancient Greek times. I informed them about George Bizet, and transcribed a simplified rendition of <i>Carmen</i> , assembled various costumes, and distributed scripts. The students performed a reenactment, depicting various scenarios such as Escamillo's entrance into the bullfighting arena. Additionally, they staged a simulated bullfight, with one student assuming the role of the bull. Throughout these performances, renowned compositions such as the "Prelude" from the <i>Carmen</i> Symphony were played. Engaging students in the performance of operas enhances their comprehension and appreciation of the art form. In addition, I instructed them to shut their eyes and attentively listen to an opera vocalist performing a delightful rendition of 'O Mio Babbino Caro'. Following the cessation of laughter, I instructed them to open their eyes and see Holly Stell, who was just 13 years old at that moment. Subsequently, their dispositions underwent a significant transformation.
62	"Incorporated within the state framework, the unit explores the interconnections between music and other subjects."
67	We are involved in a programme called "Link Up" which often involves opera performances. I have discovered that by presenting the narrative of an opera prior to introducing the musical elements, children are more inclined to attentively observe and develop an interest in it.
74	"We engage in the auditory experience of an opera selection and analyse the narrative conveyed through music. Additionally, we explore the historical context and the theatrical skills necessary for delivering a compelling performance."
77	"I categorise opera as a distinct genre of music and present various excerpts from different operas." I have invited opera artists from the nearby college to do a performance. I use it to assist youngsters in discovering their 'head voice.' Leontyne Price, hailing from Mississippi, is an important figure in Black History month.



a topic or feel that it is impossible to engage their interest, it may adversely impact their teaching effectiveness. In contrast, 43% of respondents who answered “Yes” expressed the belief that their pupils had the maturity to enjoy opera. However, only 11% of these respondents claimed that their students really demonstrate an interest in opera. The teacher’s efforts to ignite the pupils’ interest in the material being studied are crucial.

The presence of music programmes in several regions remains uncertain due to the inability to establish contact with numerous schools. Only one or two elementary schools in twelve school districts that include numerous elementary schools offered music instruction. Multiple school secretaries and administrators have notified me that due to insufficient money, music lessons have either been eliminated or are scheduled to be eliminated from their respective schools next year. One responder who replied “No” provided a wrong response to Question 6, yet their reaction was very poignant. The reply first mentions their experience teaching opera to high school students, but notes that the pupils find musicals more relevant than opera. The respondent reported that elementary music would be discontinued in the next school year. However, it remains unclear if this policy change applies just to the respondent’s school or to the whole school district. The respondent said, “Starting from next year, all elementary music, with the exception of Beginner Band, will be eliminated.” The administration’s lack of appreciation for Fine Arts and the State lawmakers’ failure to provide funds for music professors are the underlying reasons. Consequently, in order to provide a band assistant, the other programmes have been cancelled. Currently, there seems to be a lack of financial resources to support the instruction of primary music, chorus, piano lessons, and the employment of an assistant for an excessively large band programme. Regrettably, it is a fact that opera is somewhat less popular. I find it ironic that MS has a wealth of cultural traditions in the Arts, despite the shortcomings of the public education system. Similar to this educational institution, a considerable proportion of schools and school districts throughout the state have challenges in establishing a music programme, much alone one that incorporates opera. The lack of a musical education might have detrimental effects on the primary age pupils in certain school systems.

## 6. DISCUSSION

The research on Chinese opera education primarily on the historical and cultural heritage. The research undertaken by Quanyi Y. et al. and Shasha J. et al. explores several domains, including evolution, academic advancement, and aesthetics, showcasing a distinct focus on this specific field of study (Quanyi, 2023; Shasha, 2023). The research conducted by Haitao, L. et al. on New Chinese Opera Education during the 1950s and 1960s enhances the current narrative by highlighting the broad historical range and diversity within the field of Chinese opera education (Haitao, 2022). English literature, in comparison, has a distinct inclination towards integrating technological innovations with opera training. This is seen in 42.86% of the literature, which explores topics like as 3D technology, big data, and gamified learning. This underscores the notable worldwide focus on using technology in opera instruction in a creative manner. Conversely, Chinese literature addresses this matter by means of literary critiques and theoretical analysis, allocating comparatively less focus to it. Furthermore, Chinese literature offers an extensive examination of many opera genres,

demonstrating the immense scope of Chinese opera. Conversely, English literature mostly focuses on opera instruction in certain regions, like as Hong Kong and Guangdong. This tendency may be attributed to the heightened frequency of international interactions in these areas. The emphasis of English-language literature on Cantonese opera education in Hong Kong and Guangdong indicates a limited global scholarly attention towards certain regions and styles of opera. Both Chinese and English literature explore the methods and practices of opera instruction, but with different emphases. The focus of Chinese scholarship is focused on the philosophical and methodological elements of opera education, while English literature explores artist relationships and the challenges involved in altering the discipline. The authors, Yu, G. et al, provide significant insights into the civic and political transformations in opera education by using Jin Opera as a case study (Yu, 2020). This research by Shuai, F. et al. investigates the impact of visual elements of opera on the field of design education (Shuai, 2022). Siyi, J. et al. examine the evolution of parenting and management beliefs in social science courses, which reflect the current trends in opera education (Siyi, 2019). These comparative insights emphasise the distinct areas of emphasis and research approaches in Chinese and international academic circles, improving our understanding of the diverse perspectives in opera education research.

The inclusion of classical opera in the curriculum of Chinese schools offers substantial educational benefits, particularly when taught using an integrated and multidisciplinary approach. Below are many instructional strategies and practical suggestions to consider when integrating different disciplines: Importance of Teaching: Preservation of Cultural Heritage: Engage in collaboration with history and cultural studies educators to delve into the historical backdrop of classical opera. Establish correlations between the topics, narratives, and personages shown in opera and distinct epochs in Chinese history (Sims, 1992).

Enhancement of Language and Literature: Integrate the study of language arts and literature with the examination of librettos and the investigation of poetic aspects found in opera. Students might improve their language proficiency by analysing the intricate vocabulary used in operatic performances. Visual and Performing Arts Appreciation: Collaborate with arts instructors to integrate the visual and performing arts elements of classical opera. Students get the opportunity to investigate the visual components, such as costumes, makeup, and set designs, which promote the development of an appreciation for creative expression. Musical Education: Work closely with music educators to explore the musical elements of classical opera. Students may acquire knowledge in musical composition, instrumentation, and voice skills, therefore enhancing their comprehension of music. Emotional and Social Learning: Incorporate teachings on emotional intelligence and social studies, examining how classical opera mirrors society standards, principles, and emotional manifestations. This integrative approach improves pupils' emotional and social awareness. Multidisciplinary Productions: Promote multidisciplinary cooperation among students to actively engage in the creation of a traditional opera. This may engage students in several artistic disciplines such as music, theatre, visual arts, and even technology for set design, so fostering a comprehensive and well-rounded learning experience. Historical research and Research Skills: Establish a connection between classical opera and the process of historical research. Students may develop their research abilities by examining the historical authenticity of opera storylines and characters, so promoting critical thinking and enhancing their comprehension of history.

Global Perspective: Incorporate the study of classical opera into global studies and language courses. Analyse and juxtapose Chinese traditional opera with operatic customs from many civilizations, fostering a worldwide outlook. Technology Integration: Examine the use of technology in the creation and examination of traditional opera performances. Utilise digital platforms to provide virtual performances, so fostering interactive encounters that seamlessly integrate technology and the arts. Possible approaches for implementation: Interdisciplinary Projects: Promote interdisciplinary projects that foster cooperation across language arts, music, history, and arts courses. Students have the ability to develop projects that combine their knowledge and skills from these several areas. Guest Lectures and Workshops: Arrange for specialists in opera, history, or the arts to provide informative talks or lead educational sessions. This affords students the opportunity to engage with practical applications of their knowledge and get exposure to a wide range of viewpoints. Field Trips and Performances: Arrange excursions to opera houses, museums, or cultural organisations that exhibit classical opera. Participate in live performances or virtual events to provide students direct and immediate experiences. Student Productions: Involve students in creating their own small-scale operatic performances. Students are engaged in a collaborative endeavour that encompasses music composition, scriptwriting, stage design, and performance.

Integrate literary study of opera librettos into language arts curricula. Students get the opportunity to analyse the story structure, character development, and symbolism within the opera. Integration into Language Learning: Utilize segments from operatic librettos as educational resources for language acquisition. Not only does this improve language proficiency, but it also acquaints pupils with cultural nuances inherent in the language (Abril & Gault, 2006).

Arrange culmination events or exhibits to display students' multidisciplinary efforts pertaining to classical opera. This facilitates the dissemination of their learning results to the general audience. Digital Storytelling: Incorporate digital storytelling methods with the examination of traditional opera. Students have the ability to produce multimedia presentations that include music, pictures, and narratives in order to convey their comprehension. Utilise online platforms and interactive tools that provide immersive experiences pertaining to classical opera for the purpose of learning. Examples of such resources are virtual reality simulations, digital repositories, and interactive educational modules. Interdisciplinary evaluations: Create interdisciplinary examinations to examine students' comprehension of classical opera across several academic disciplines. Assessments include a variety of tasks such as essays, performances, presentations, and reflections (Rincón & Rusinek, 2010). Chinese schools may enhance students' educational experience by incorporating classical opera into other subjects, offering a holistic and enriching approach. This approach not only corresponds to the importance of classical opera but also promotes a comprehensive comprehension of the arts and culture.

The discussion section interprets the results, examines their implications, and explores the broader significance of teaching classical opera in Chinese schools. This section also addresses the challenges identified and provides recommendations for successful implementation. The survey results indicate a strong awareness and appreciation of classical opera among students, teachers, and parents. This suggests that there is a receptive audience for integrating classical opera into the school curriculum. The high level of appreciation underscores the cultural value that stakeholders place on traditional arts, which aligns with the broader goals of cultural preservation and education.

### 6.1 Educational Benefits

Participants perceive significant educational benefits from teaching classical opera, particularly in enhancing artistic skills, cognitive abilities, and social competencies. These findings are consistent with existing literature, which highlights the multifaceted nature of classical opera as an educational tool. The development of artistic skills through opera, such as singing, acting, and costume design, provides students with a rich, hands-on learning experience that fosters creativity and self-expression. The cognitive benefits, such as improved memory and analytical skills, can be attributed to the complex narratives and emotional depth of operatic works, which challenge students to engage in higher-order thinking. Additionally, the social benefits, including teamwork and communication skills, stem from the collaborative nature of opera productions.

### 6.2 Challenges and Barriers

The primary challenges identified include the lack of trained teachers, insufficient resources and funding, and limited time in the school curriculum. These barriers highlight the need for strategic planning and resource allocation to support the integration of classical opera into schools.

- **Lack of Trained Teachers:** The absence of adequately trained teachers is a significant hurdle. Teacher training programs and professional development workshops are essential to equip educators with the necessary skills and knowledge to teach classical opera effectively.
- **Insufficient Resources and Funding:** The lack of resources, including musical instruments, costumes, and stage equipment, poses a challenge to implementing opera programs. Securing funding through government grants, private sponsorships, and community partnerships can help address this issue.
- **Limited Curriculum Time:** Incorporating classical opera into an already packed school curriculum requires careful planning and innovative scheduling. Integrating opera into existing subjects and offering extracurricular activities can provide students with opportunities to engage with opera without overburdening the curriculum.

### 6.3 Suggestions for Effective Implementation

The suggestions provided by survey participants for effective implementation, such as professional development for teachers, partnerships with local opera troupes, and integration into various subjects, are practical and feasible. These strategies can help overcome the identified challenges and enhance the overall impact of classical opera education.

- **Professional Development:** Regular training and workshops for teachers can improve their confidence and competence in teaching classical opera. Collaborations with professional opera artists can provide valuable insights and expertise.
- **Partnerships with Local Opera Troupes:** Engaging with local opera troupes can bring authentic experiences to students and provide additional resources, such as performance venues and costumes. These partnerships can also offer mentorship opportunities for students interested in pursuing opera further.
- **Integration into Various Subjects:** Incorporating classical opera into language and literature, history, music, and art classes can provide a multidisciplinary approach to learning. This integration can make the curriculum more dynamic and engaging for students.

- **Extracurricular Activities:** Establishing opera clubs and organizing performances can create additional avenues for student participation. These activities can enhance students' skills and provide a platform for showcasing their talents.

#### **6.4 Broader Implications**

The integration of classical opera into Chinese schools has broader implications for cultural preservation, student development, and educational innovation. By teaching classical opera, schools can play a pivotal role in preserving and transmitting cultural heritage to future generations. This cultural education fosters a sense of national identity and pride among students, contributing to social cohesion and continuity. From an educational perspective, classical opera offers a unique and enriching learning experience that combines artistic, cognitive, and social development. The holistic nature of opera education aligns with contemporary educational goals that emphasize the development of well-rounded individuals with diverse skills and competencies. Moreover, the successful integration of classical opera can serve as a model for incorporating other traditional arts into the school curriculum. This approach can promote a more inclusive and comprehensive educational framework that values and nurtures cultural diversity.

### **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings and discussion, the following recommendations are proposed to support the successful integration of classical opera into Chinese schools:

1. **Develop Comprehensive Teacher Training Programs:** Establish teacher training programs that focus on the pedagogy of classical opera and provide ongoing professional development opportunities.
2. **Secure Funding and Resources:** Advocate for funding from government agencies, private sponsors, and community organizations to provide the necessary resources for opera programs.
3. **Foster Community and Parental Involvement:** Engage parents and the local community in supporting opera education through volunteer opportunities, fundraising events, and attendance at performances.
4. **Implement Interdisciplinary Approaches:** Design interdisciplinary curricula that integrate classical opera into various subjects, enhancing the overall learning experience.
5. **Create Extracurricular Opportunities:** Establish opera clubs and organize regular performances to provide students with additional opportunities to engage with classical opera.
6. **Monitor and Evaluate Programs:** Implement regular monitoring and evaluation of opera programs to assess their effectiveness and make necessary adjustments.

### **8. CONCLUSION**

The results of this study highlight the significant educational and cultural benefits of teaching classical opera in Chinese schools. Despite the challenges, strategic planning, and effective implementation

strategies can enable schools to successfully integrate classical opera into their curricula. By doing so, schools can provide enriching educational experiences, promote cultural preservation, and contribute to the holistic development of students. The findings and recommendations presented in this study offer a comprehensive framework for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders to advance the integration of classical opera in education.

Music education is a crucial component of a child's primary education. It is essential that kids get not just a musical education, but also a broad and diversified musical education. Incorporating opera within the music curriculum may serve as a valuable asset for music educators as they design their curriculum. By integrating opera into the music curriculum, students may acquire expertise in several fields such as music, history, literature, drama, and beyond. To ensure the continuation of classical music and opera, it is imperative to cultivate a new audience, since these artistic expressions are progressively diminishing in their significance within mainstream society. The most open-minded and responsive audience to engage with is often young children in elementary school, before they enter the pre-adolescent stage in middle school. Not introducing young people to opera at this age reduces the probability of them establishing a preference for this kind of music in the future. The survey results indicate that students have very little interest in opera, highlighting the need of instructors cultivating a true love for this art form. Alternatively, students may lack exposure to opera since it has become less relevant in modern society. More than 50% of the surveyed primary music teachers said that they do not include opera into the educational programme for fourth and fifth grade students. The main impediments hindering these teachers from incorporating opera into their curriculum seem to be inadequate financial resources and time constraints, maybe attributable to the pressures of standardised testing. However, the majority of teachers who currently do not include opera into their music programmes have shown a readiness to do so upon being presented with the benefits of teaching opera. Educators that include opera into their curriculum recognise its capacity to instruct several subjects. Based on this study, three successful strategies for implementing a thorough music education that includes opera are enough financial backing for school music programmes, a renewed emphasis on the arts in schools, and improved teacher instruction.

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