

THE SPECIFIC FEATURES OF TEACHING TRADITIONAL NAY PERFORMANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: BASED ON THE EXAMPLE OF SHASHMAQOM INSTRUMENTAL PATHS

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Abstract: This study examines the specific pedagogical features of teaching traditional nay performance in higher music education, focusing on the Shashmaqom instrumental paths as a case study. The research aims to explore how innovative teaching methods can be integrated with traditional oral transmission practices to enhance student learning outcomes. The nay, one of the oldest wind instruments in Central Asian culture, carries a deep connection to the spiritual and modal system of the Maqom heritage. Using observation, interview, and experimental instruction methods, the research analyzes the effectiveness of newly developed strategies in improving students' performance accuracy, intonation stability, and interpretative understanding of the Shashmaqom modes. The study contributes to the field of ethnomusicological pedagogy by offering a systematic model for teaching traditional instruments in higher education.

Keywords: Traditional Nay, Shashmaqom, Instrumental Pedagogy, Maqom Performance, Higher Music Education, Innovative Teaching Methods

1. Introduction

The nay, a traditional end-blown flute, holds a central place in the musical heritage of Uzbekistan and the broader Maqom tradition. As a primary melodic instrument in Shashmaqom performance, the nay embodies centuries of artistic evolution and spiritual symbolism. Teaching nay performance in higher education involves both technical mastery and deep understanding of modal systems (maqom). Unlike Western classical instruments, the nay relies on flexible intonation, microtonal intervals, and specific breathing techniques. This research seeks to identify effective ways to teach nay performance that both respect the authenticity of Shashmaqom traditions and utilize contemporary educational tools.

2. Literature Review

The tradition of nay performance in Central Asian culture has been discussed by numerous scholars. According to Mirzayev (1982) and Rajabiy (1960), the nay is not only a musical instrument but also a spiritual medium that connects human expression with the philosophical essence of Maqom art. Research by Levin (1996) and During (2001) emphasizes that traditional instruments like the nay are best taught through aural transmission and imitation. Modern Uzbek music education now combines classical and traditional pedagogical principles (Karimova, 2020; Sharipov, 2021). Globally, similar transformations have occurred in ethnomusicology-based instruction (Schippers, 2010; Nettle, 2005).

3. Methodology

The study was conducted at the Yunus Rajabiy National Institute of Maqom Art, within the Department of Instrumental Performance. Participants included 15 undergraduate students specializing in nay performance, from 2nd to 4th year. The study used a qualitative and quantitative mixed-method approach including observation, interviews, and performance assessments before and after experimental instruction.



4. Results

The experimental teaching process revealed significant improvements among the students of the experimental group compared to the control group. After the 16-week program, the experimental group's average increased to 89.6, while the control group reached 78.3. Students trained with digital pitch analyzers demonstrated greater awareness of microtonal intervals and improved rhythm and breath coordination.

5. Discussion

The findings confirm that incorporating innovative teaching tools can substantially improve both technical and interpretative skills in nay education. The ustoz–shogird model provides authenticity, yet it often lacks systematic evaluation. Introducing structured digital feedback mechanisms helps align traditional instruction with academic requirements.

6. Conclusion

Teaching nay performance within higher education requires a pedagogical balance between traditional values and modern innovations. Combining digital resources with oral teaching methods leads to significant improvements in proficiency and expression. Innovative approaches—such as digital pitch visualization, rhythmic mapping, and interactive feedback—make learning more engaging and preserve authenticity.

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