

PIANO STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES WITH REMOTE PIANO INSTRUCTION

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative phenomenological study explored student perspectives and experiences with remote piano instruction during COVID-19. Ten participating students responded to 13 original, vetted questions via phone/video conferencing or Google form, an online application for uploading responses to questions. The findings indicated that the students believed they benefitted from continuing their piano instruction via remote piano instruction. Research findings also revealed the students had to manage and cope with audio/video technological interruptions and socio-emotional issues associated with remote piano instruction. The research findings further indicated the students' use of their preferred virtual communication application to interact, see, hear, and maintain their established teacher/student relationship helped offset the problems associated with remote piano instruction. All ten students felt that they have continued to progress with their piano performance and music reading skills via remote piano instruction. The findings would benefit and encourage piano instructors, researchers, and technology developers to conduct more research, both qualitative and quantitative, to determine the best measures for improving students' and teachers' experiences with remote piano instruction.

KEYWORDS

Remote Piano Instruction, Virtual Communication, Webcam, Audio/Video Apps, Piano Students' Perspectives

1. INTRODUCTION

Before March 2020, the researcher for this study was providing traditional, private (individual and group) in-person piano lessons to students. The students were making good progress with their piano performance and music reading skills due to their consistent lessons and practice schedules. The students had previously performed in annual piano recitals and had always worked hard to master specially selected piano solos for these recitals. However, the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) and the resulting lockdown and social distancing requirements caused the students' piano lessons to come to a screeching halt in March 2020. Some students wanted to continue their piano instruction; thus, remote piano instruction became a viable alternative to the traditional, private in-person piano instruction. Remote piano instruction enabled interested piano students an opportunity to interface with their piano instructor via virtual modes of communication to not only keep up their music reading and piano performance skills but also to maintain their established teacher/student relationship.

Remote piano instruction is a type of online piano instruction that has been effectively implemented by piano instructors during private and group piano lessons (Dumlavwalla, 2017). Remote piano instruction involves the following: the piano teacher provides the lessons from a distance whereby the piano instructor is not physically sitting beside or in the physical presence of the students (Comeau, et al., 2019). The piano instructor and the piano students use technological devices such as laptops, desktops, iPads, Chromebooks, and smartphones with audio/video applications (apps), microphones, speakers, and webcam capabilities (Dumlavwalla, 2017). These technological devices enable the piano instructor and piano students to see, hear, and communicate with each other similar to how interactions occur during traditional, in-person piano instruction (Pike & Shoemaker, 2015).

Due to Covid-19, piano instructors have had to alter their mode of piano instruction to include technology to teach online (McAlister, 2020). The online teaching can include remote instruction and virtual instruction (Kim, 2016). Remote instruction requires the piano instructor to use technology to see, hear, and interact with

piano students during the piano lessons; virtual instruction involves piano students accessing software programs that teach piano performance and music reading skills (Kim, 2016).

According to Wachter (2017), the use of piano instruction software programs can often be attractive to some piano students since these software programs are usually free and available on YouTube Piano Tutorials. This online instruction allows students to experiment with learning to play piano for personal fulfillment (Wachter, 2017). Also, online piano instruction can be attractive to some piano students since online piano instruction connects students with their familiarity and use of technology (Jutras, 2014). Although online piano instruction can be an attractive venture for some students, Wachter (2017) indicates that online piano instruction cannot compete with the teacher/student interactions of private and group piano instruction. Pike and Shoemaker (2015) reveal that since the teacher and student can see, hear, and interact with each other during remote piano instruction, this type of online piano instruction continues to foster viable teacher/student relationships. Thus, remote piano instruction helps piano instructors use technology while promoting teacher/student interactions and relationships.

Pike and Shoemaker (2015) further indicate that remote piano teachers can continue using traditional materials of instruction such as leveled piano instruction books. Many of these piano instruction books include classic piano pieces in levels and forms that stimulate students' piano performance and increase the students' gratification with playing the piano (Story, 2011). Due to the variety of leveled piano instruction books on the market, piano teachers can select books that best address their students' abilities and interest in playing the piano (Bakkum, 2010).

Remote piano instruction also involves eliminating distance and travel associated with piano instruction. Campbell (2004) indicates that remote piano instruction can be a viable option when traditional in-person piano instruction presents obstacles due to distance and time constraints. Campbell further reveals that remote piano instruction enables the piano student to continue their piano instruction remotely from a piano instructor of their preference from a distant location. Thus, remote piano instruction enables students to keep up their piano performance and reading skills despite distance restrictions, such as with COVID-19.

Since the advent of COVID-19, the researcher/piano teacher implemented remote piano instruction as an alternative to traditional in-person piano instruction. Three phases occurred with the lesson activities: phase one – before the lesson, phase two – during the lesson, and phase three – after the lesson.

Phase one: The piano instructor engaged in the following: (a) collaboration with students and their parents to identify the technological device and virtual communication application with audio/video capabilities to be used, (b) purchase and use of same music books assigned to students during instruction, and (c) positioning of the piano instructor and student technological devices and keyboard/piano at the beginning of each lesson to enable teacher and student to see each other's face, fingers on the piano keys, books, and seating position. These preliminary steps, corroborated by Pike and Shoemaker (2015), promote productive remote piano lessons.

Phase two: The piano instructor engaged the students as follows: (a) performing scales and technical studies, (b) sight-reading and identifying musical notation, (c) counting/clapping note values and rhythms of piano pieces, (d) practicing and performing piano pieces in their music books, (e) questions/answers and discourse between teacher and students about musical notation, musical terms, and history of composers of the musical compositions, and (f) assessing the performance of students' assigned piano pieces. According to Hyry-Beihammer (2010), teacher/student interactions and discourse about musical notation, musical terms, piano performance, and music history, associated with the narrative approach to piano instruction, enhance students' musical knowledge and performance skills.

Phase three: The piano instructor engaged in the following: (a) assigning students scales/technical studies and piano pieces to practice between piano lessons, (b) receiving verbal feedback from the students about their experience with remote piano instruction, and (c) providing feedback to the virtual communication platform about technical experiences with the piano instruction. Dumlavwalla (2017) indicates that these efforts enhance self-efficacy, musical knowledge, and piano performance.

While remote piano instruction can be a viable alternative to traditional piano instruction, the researcher/piano teacher observed various problems and obstacles the students encountered with remote piano instruction. To address the problem of how piano students were adjusting to remote piano instruction during COVID-19, the researcher/piano teacher conducted a qualitative phenomenological research study to gather and analyze data based on the perceptions and lived experiences of the students with remote piano instruction. The purpose of the study was to determine how are piano students faring with receiving private piano remote instruction from their piano teacher via virtual modes of communication. The question for this study was: How do piano students manage and cope with remote piano instruction in their efforts to continue learning to play the piano despite the social distancing restrictions of the coronavirus pandemic?

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Context and Participation

The researcher, who conducted this qualitative phenomenological study, was also the private piano instructor of the study. The researcher/piano instructor is currently certified in music education, early childhood education, special education, and administration/ supervision/educational leadership.

The research study occurred on the East Coast of the United States via virtual modes of communication due to the social distancing restrictions of the coronavirus pandemic. The study participants included ten private piano students who chose to continue their piano instruction via remote piano instruction. The students' ages ranged from ages 7 to 62 and included only one adult piano student. The students were identified as Student A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, and J to maintain their anonymity for this study.

The researcher used the qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the piano students' perspectives and life experiences with remote piano instruction. The students' responses to 13 original research questions, created by the researcher, revealed the phenomenon of how the researcher's piano students were managing and coping with remote piano instruction amid COVID-19. The 13 original questions were validated (vetted) by expert professionals certified in music education and licensed to practice school social work. The researcher consulted these expert professionals throughout the research to provide credibility to the study.

2.2 Methods Used for Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher used qualitative methods to collect and analyze data.

Due to the social distancing restrictions of COVID-19, the researcher used virtual modes of communication to collect data from the students. The researcher presented the 13 original, vetted questions to students aged 11 to 62 via an online Google form with the uploaded questions. The students were required to respond to the questions and submit their responses to the Google form platform. For the younger students aged 7 (grade 1) and 8 (grade 2), who were not able to respond to the questions on the Google Form, the researcher video conferenced or phone conferenced with the students and recorded the students' verbatim responses on the Google form. The researcher recorded their responses in a verbatim format to ensure that the younger students' actual words were a part of the evidence collected. The older students' verbatim responses also were included in the evidence. Therefore, the students' responses have some grammatical errors. To provide credibility to the study and eliminate researcher bias, the researcher did not change or correct any of the students' grammatical errors.

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed the data using codes to categorize the data. The codes became the basis for the triangulation of the data. The triangulation of the data was conducted to determine similarities and differences among the data derived from the students' responses to the 13 questions. The triangulation of the data led to the emerging themes or major ideas that substantiated the research findings.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

3.1 Research Questions and Responses

All of the students' verbatim responses are provided below:

Research Question 1: *What is your grade level or highest level of education?*

Student A: Grade 1, Student B: Master's Degree, Student C: Grade 12, Student D: Grade 2, Student E: Grade 2, Student F: Grade 6, Student G: Grade 7, Student H: Grade 6, Student I: Grade 11, and Student J: Grade 9

Research Question 2: *How old are you?*

Student A: 7 years old, Student B: 62 years old, Student C: 17 years old, Student D: 8 years old, Student E: 8 years old, Student F: 11 years old, Student G: 12 years old, Student H: 11 years old, Student I: 17 years old, and Student J: 14 years old

Research Question 3: *What music book are you currently using for piano lessons?*

Student A – Michael Aaron Primer, Student B – Alfred’s Basic Adult Piano Course, Student C – Michael Aaron book 3, Student D- Michael Aaron book level 1, Student E – Piano Adventures level 1, Student F – I am currently using the Michael Aaron Piano Course Lessons Grade 2 book, Student G- Michael Aaron Piano

Course Lessons Grade 2 book, Student H- Michael Aaron Grade 2 book, Student I -John Thompson Modern Course for the Piano Second Grade book, and Student J-Michael Aaron Piano Course Lessons Grade 3 book.

Research Question 4: *Explain why learning to play the piano is important to you.*

Student A: Because I love piano!

Student B: I’ve always admired piano players. Played cello during my primary education. Wanted to learn something new, to enhance brain function.

Student C: Learning to play the piano is important to me because it's something I've been doing for majority of my life and it’s a part of me now. I can’t imagine not playing the piano.

Student D: Because I like music.

Student E: Because I like to play music. I like how the piano sounds. I want to play piano.

Student F: Playing the piano is important to me because when my grandparents used to have a piano, I would pretend to play on it whenever I went over there. By pretending to play I mean banging on random keys. My parents thought it would be a good idea to sign me up for piano lessons so that I could actually learn how to play properly. So, they signed me up and I have gotten pretty good at it. I enjoy learning new pieces and playing them for my family. Piano lessons have improved my patience because sometimes I do not learn a piece in one day and I have to keep trying until I get it completely right. It is also a good skill to learn for the future because it could help me get a part-time job at a church or teaching piano if I take it seriously. It can also count as a useful skill to help me get into college or a music program at school.

Student G: It’s important to me because I like to play to calm down and I like to use my fingers and fiddle with them so it helps with that too.

Student H: Playing piano is important to me because I always wanted to play and learn a new musical skill that I haven’t learnt before.

Student I: Learning to play piano is important to me because it’s a fun hobby.

Student J: Learning piano is important to me because it is a fun and useful skill to have that I can use in the future.

Research Question 5: *Why did you choose to have your piano instructor to provide you with remote piano instruction?*

Student A: Because I like my piano teacher

Student B: Convenience.

Student C: I wanted to continue my lessons despite the fact that they would be online because there is no end date to this pandemic and I didn't want to wait it out. I want to continue to improve my skills and what I know regardless of if I am able to see my teacher in-person or not.

Student D: Because of coronavirus.

Student E: Because the iPad is fun. So, it is easy to touch things on the tablet iPad.

Student F: I chose to have my piano instructor provide me with remote piano instruction because she recommended it to my parents after not being able to meet with her in person anymore due to COVID19. I was tired of playing the same songs repeatedly while waiting for the pandemic to end and wanted to learn fresh, new songs to play.

Student G: Because I didn’t want to fall behind in learning piano.

Student H: Due to COVID-19, we have to practice social distancing and stay indoors so that we can stay safe during this time and I chose to have my piano instructor to help me with remote piano instruction because it’s easier to hear my piano instructor play and show me the examples so I can improve my piano skills.

Student I: I chose to have my piano instructor provide me with remote piano instruction so that I can continue to develop my piano skills.

Student J: Because I want to keep up with my piano skills and learn new material.

Research Question 6: *What virtual communication mode are you using for your remote piano instruction?*

Student A: WhatsApp, Student B: Google Duo, Student C: WhatsApp, Student D: Google Duo, Student E: Google Duo, Student F: Zoom, Student G: Zoom, Student H: Google Duo, Student I: Zoom, and Student J: Zoom

Research Question 7: *Why did you choose this particular virtual mode of communication?*

Student A: My mommy's phone has WhatsApp.

Student B: It is what my instructor uses and it is a free application on my device.

Student C: It seemed easiest to do and so far has worked really well.

Student D: I didn't choose. Mommy chose.

Student E: Because Zoom sometimes freezes and Google Duo works better and does not freeze so much.

Student F: I chose Zoom because that is what I also use for virtual learning online for school.

Student G: It was easier for me.

Student H: I chose to do this type of virtual mode so that it can be easy since you can call and communicate through a video call.

Student I: Zoom is the easiest to navigate in my personal opinion.

Student J: My teacher and I both know how to use it.

Research Question 8: *What do you do during and after your remote piano lessons to improve your music reading skills and piano playing?*

Student A: Practice and listen to my teacher.

Student B: Practice, practice, practice.

Student C: I make sure to pay attention and I take notes during my lesson so I can know exactly what to practice and how to practice. I also make sure to practice everyday along with practicing my entire repertoire.

Student D: I practice. I listen.

Student E: I never give up. I try harder to get the notes, music, and counting right. I count and sometimes I use the metronome for steady counting. I practice my piano pieces and count.

Student F: I practice my piano at least 30 minutes daily to improve my piano playing and music reading skills.

I also pay attention to my teacher during lessons when she corrects me if I play a wrong note so I can fix my mistake.

Student G: I practice.

Student H: After I am done with my remote piano lessons, I always practice every evening so that it would be easy for me to move on to the next song.

Student I: I practice my music pieces in the book and learn other piano pieces from YouTube videos.

Student J: During the lesson I start by playing scales then we move into the piece we were last working on in my book. If I'm learning a new piece my teacher has me read and play the notes at first glance, we go section by section. Afterwards I practice the section/sections I'm supposed to so next lesson we can move on or I can play it with no mistakes for a grade.

Research Question 9: *How does your piano teacher help you with improving your music reading skills and piano playing during remote piano instruction?*

Student A: When I play a wrong note and key, my piano teacher helps me to play the right note and key. My piano

teacher can see my piano when I play and that helps me.

Student B: She takes incremental steps to learning, reducing the lesson from overwhelming to attainable.

Student C: My piano teacher always answers my questions I have and makes sure that any confusion on my part is cleared up before my lesson is over.

Student D: She helps me to practice my piano pieces and she gives me corrections.

Student E: My teacher tells me to count steady and look at the grand staff to figure out the letter name of notes.

I ask questions about the treble and bass clef to help figure out the letter name of notes. If I'm wrong, she tells me the correct letter name of the note and key. She tells me to look at the clefs.

Student F: She helps me read the notes if I need help and corrects me if I accidentally play the wrong notes and/or I can't figure out what I did incorrectly.

Student G: She tells me to slow down and to read over what I am about to play.

Student H: My piano teacher helps me to improve my music and reading skills by doing my scales so that if I am doing a new song, I can know where to put my hands in the position.

Student I: My piano teacher helps me improve my music reading skills and piano playing by having me review my chords and make sure that I'm playing the correct notes in every piece of music.

Student J: If I make a mistake with a note or play the wrong chord, she'll correct me and if I don't understand why she'll explain.

Research Question 10: *Do you think remote piano instruction is helping you to keep up your piano playing skills? Why or why not?*

Student A: Yes, my piano teacher sees me through the camera. I think I'm getting better because I'm learning new things.

Student B: Absolutely

Student C: I think my remote piano instruction is without a doubt helping me keep up with my piano [playing skills]. Instead of taking a break from the piano because of COVID-19, I have continued to learn and expand my skills.

Student D: Yes, I am keeping up. It does the same thing as when the teacher is here.

Student E: Sometimes it helps because I feel like I'm learning new pieces.

Student F: I think that remote piano instruction is helping me to keep up with my piano playing skills. At the start of the pandemic, I was repeating the same songs over and over again because my parents stopped my lessons because of social distancing rules. This did not help me because eventually I memorized the songs and I wasn't challenging myself and I soon became bored. Remote piano lessons have allowed me to continue to learn new pieces, while keeping safe.

Student G: Yes, because of all the skills that I learn in the Michael Aaron book.

Student H: I think that remote piano lessons is helping me because when there is a group of people who do piano lessons on the same day I do it in-person [group piano], there is a lot of noise that doesn't let me hear what I am playing.

Student I: Yes, remote piano instruction is helping me keep up my piano playing skills because it reminds me to set time aside during the week to practice pieces that I'm learning during remote piano lessons.

Student J: Yes, it is helping me keep up my skills because I'm more likely to practice a new piece that I've learned so that I'm ready to play it the next lesson.

Research Question 11: *What do you like about remote piano instruction?*

Student A: I like it because I can still see my teacher.

Student B: Technology allows for the convenience of a home instruction. I don't have to drive anywhere. Comfort of being home. I can have a lesson in my PJs. No worries regarding social distancing.

Student C: I like that I am able to sleep in and no longer have to have so much of my Saturday taken up from my mom driving there and back home from my lesson.

Student D: I like that it does the same thing as when the teacher is at my home.

Student E: I like that I get to draw happy faces on the book to show that I played the piano piece correctly.

Student F: I like that I can finally continue to learn new and exciting piano pieces again instead of playing the same songs repeatedly. I like that we have the option to use technology since we cannot have instructions in person because of the virus. If we couldn't meet remotely, I would have had to stop taking lessons until it was safe to do so again in person.

Student G: I like how I still get to learn every Saturday.

Student H: I like remote piano instruction because it is easier for me to do things like having a nice area that I can hear myself play.

Student I: I like that remote piano instruction is very convenient and how you don't have to worry about being late or on time due to external factors.

Student J: It helps me keep up my piano skills.

Research Question 12: *What do you dislike about remote piano instruction?*

Student A: I'm not sitting next to my teacher.

Student B: I have no dislikes; this has been a very pleasurable experience.

Student C: Sometimes it's hard to communicate and show my teacher when I'm confused.

Student D: Sometimes it glitches. The tablet sometimes freezes and I can't see the teacher moving and I can't hear the teacher.

Student E: That when the teacher says a letter name of note, I think she is saying another letter. I can't always hear the teacher really well. Freezing – the teacher stops moving and I can't hear her speak. It sometimes sounds scratchy.

Student F: I dislike that sometimes our computers freeze which puts a delay to the lesson. I also do not like the fact that she cannot physically correct me by moving my hands when I make a mistake or am in the wrong position.

Student G: I don't like how my instructor can't physically help me or show me if I play a note wrong.

Student H: The thing I dislike about remote piano instruction is that I am not used to it because I am used to doing piano lessons in person more than online or virtual.

Student I: Sometimes the audio will cut out and sometimes it's hard to tell what note is being played over Zoom.

Student J: Sometimes the piano [sound] cuts out or I can't hear my teacher properly.

Research Question 13: *When the coronavirus pandemic is over, which type of piano instruction would you prefer?*

Student A: traditional in-person piano instruction, Student B: remote piano instruction, Student C: remote piano

instruction, Student D: traditional in-person piano instruction, Student E: traditional in-person piano instruction, Student F: traditional in-person piano instruction, Student G: traditional in-person piano instruction, Student H: traditional in-person piano instruction, Student I: traditional in-person piano instruction, and Student J: traditional in-person piano instruction.

3.2 Analysis of the Data

Codes were developed and used to triangulate the data. The data were the students' responses to the research questions. Themes emerged from the triangulation of the data and were the basis for the findings.

Codes were as follows: piano performance/music enjoyment and fulfillment, positive teacher/student relationship, usefulness, user-friendly, virtual communication applications, continuity of instruction, COVID-19 social distancing restrictions, positive teacher/student interactions, incremental instruction, remote instruction-convenient and safe, piano practice, no dislikes, technical interruptions, behavioral/socio-emotional effects, and enhancement of piano performance skills.

The triangulation of the data indicated that there were some similarities and differences among the students' responses. The similarities involved all ten students believed the following: (a) piano playing is an enjoyable and fulfilling endeavor, (b) their choice and use of a virtual communication device were based on being user friendly, (c) improving piano performance and music reading skills requires personal practice and positive teacher/student interactions/relationship during remote piano instruction, and (d) remote piano instruction is safe and allows continuity of piano instruction despite COVID-19 social distancing restrictions.

The triangulation of data revealed differences among the responses of some of the students to various questions. Student H (age 11) believed that remote piano instruction eliminated distractions and unwanted noise from traditional in-person group piano instruction. Only Student B (age 62) felt no dislike for remote piano instruction, while 6 of the students disliked the freezing of the computer screen and problems with audio. Student A (age 7), Student F (age 11), and Student G (age 12) disliked the inability of the teacher to be in their physical presence during remote piano instruction. Student H (age 11) disliked remote piano because she is just not used to this form of instruction. Four students viewed piano instruction as a useful venture as follows: (a) Student B (age 62) helps with brain function, (b) Student G (age 12) calms her and enables the fiddling of her fingers productively, and (c) Student F (age 11) and Student J (age 14) is a useful skill to have in the future. Finally, only 2 students indicated that they would prefer remote piano instruction once COVID-19 is over, while the other 8 students indicated that they wanted to resume traditional in-person piano instruction.

The themes that emerged from the coding and triangulation of the data were: Remote Piano Instruction during COVID-19 involves: (a) Opportunities for Continuous Piano Instruction (b) Fosters Continuity of Positive Teacher/Student Interactions and Relationships (c) Managing and Coping with Using Technology for Piano Instruction; and (d) Opportunities for Continuous Improvement with Piano Performance and Music Reading Skills.

4. DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Findings

The findings indicated that the student responses provided the evidence to answer the research question: How do piano students manage and cope with remote piano instruction in their efforts to continue learning to play the piano despite the social distancing restrictions of the coronavirus pandemic? The emerging themes provided evidence that focused on what remote piano instruction during COVID-19 involves from the participating piano students' perspectives. The emerging themes are discussed below:

Theme A: Opportunities for Continuous Piano Instruction. The triangulation of the data indicated that all of the students believed that remote piano instruction provided them with the opportunity to continue their piano instruction with their traditional in-person piano teacher and use of leveled music books. All ten students expressed a desire to play the piano. The ten students indicated that remote piano instruction is helping them to continue to learn new piano pieces. The ten students also revealed that remote piano instruction is a viable alternative to traditional in-person piano instruction during the social distancing restrictions posed by COVID-19.

Theme B: Fosters Continuity of Positive Teacher/Student Interactions and Relationships. The triangulation of the data indicated that remote piano instruction enabled the students to continue positive, established interactions and relationships with their piano instructor as a result of the following: (a) being able to still see and hear the teacher, (b) incremental instruction, (c) teacher/student question-answer segments, (d) verbal assistance from the teacher with identifying and playing correct notes and piano keys, and (e) teacher's requirement for students to count, sight-read music, play scales, and play chords. Positive teacher/student interactions and relationships during remote piano instruction have helped to make this a viable alternative to traditional in-person piano instruction.

Theme C: Managing and Coping with Using Technology for Piano Instruction. According to the triangulation of the data, the piano students' use of virtual modes of communication for remote piano instruction presented some obstacles. These obstacles included: (a) freezing of the video, audio, and microphone features, (b) not being able to hear the piano teacher well, and (c) not being in the physical presence of the teacher during instruction. Using a preferred virtual communication mode and continued teacher/student interactions helped students to manage and cope with using technology during remote piano lessons. Only 2 students revealed that they prefer to continue remote piano instruction once COVID-19 is over, while the other 8 students indicated that they prefer to resume traditional in-person piano instruction.

Theme D: Opportunities for Continuous Improvement with Piano Performance and Music Reading Skills. The triangulation of the data indicated that all ten piano students experienced an increase in their piano performance and music reading skills as a result of continuing their piano instruction remotely. Also, all ten students believed that their piano teacher helps them learn new skills and piano selections since they can still see, hear, and interact with their piano teacher during remote piano lessons. According to the students, remote piano instruction has enabled them to continue piano lessons with their piano teacher and progress despite COVID-19.

4.2 Implications, Recommendations for Future Research, and Conclusions

The findings of the study indicated that piano students continued to increase their piano performance and music reading skills via remote piano instruction.

Based on the piano students' perspectives and experiences explored in this study, the findings revealed that the students benefitted from remote piano instruction. However, the findings revealed that the students had to manage and cope with the accompanying technological and socio-emotional issues. The findings also revealed

that the students' use of a preferred mode of virtual communication and the opportunity to interact with their piano teacher helped to make remote piano instruction a successful venture. These findings imply that there is a need for piano teachers, researchers, and technology developers to explore viable ways to improve technology and remote piano instruction from students' perspectives. Iwaguchi (2012) corroborates these findings since Iwaguchi indicated that student perspectives of lesson outcomes help improve piano instruction. Future research, both qualitative and quantitative, should be continued to explore and enhance the technological and socio-emotional aspects associated with remote piano instruction. Future research should reflect the perspectives and experiences of piano students.

This qualitative phenomenological research study revealed the perspectives and lived experiences of piano students with remote piano instruction during COVID-19. Continued research, adjustments to piano instruction, and improvements with technology should occur and be based upon student perspectives and lived experiences with remote piano instruction. Using student perspectives and lived experiences, researchers, piano instructors, and technology developers can improve their efforts to eliminate technological interruptions and promote better teacher/student interactions and relationships during remote piano instruction.

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