

Editorial

**Gwen Moore¹, Alex Ruthmann² and
Francisco Javier Zarza-Alzugaray³**

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As music education continues to evolve within an increasingly interconnected and complex world, the *International Journal of Music Education* remains committed to presenting high-quality scholarship that reflects the diversity of perspectives, practices, and research methodologies shaping our field today. The 12 articles gathered in this issue exemplify this mission, offering insights that span continents, educational levels, and disciplinary approaches. Together, they illuminate the multifaceted ways in which music fosters learning, inclusion, wellbeing, and human connection.

This issue opens with *Self-regulation in online string instrument lessons: Motivation, social interaction, and learning environment*, by Dora Utermohl de Queiroz and colleagues, which explores the dynamics of self-regulated learning within online instrumental teaching contexts. Their findings reveal how digital spaces can foster motivation, persistence, and teacher–student connection, even across physical distances.

From Latin America, Patrick Freer's *Poverty, Adolescent Males, and Singing: A Profile of Schools in Bogotá, Colombia* offers an important perspective on the social and cultural dimensions of choral participation among adolescent males. His study underscores how economic adversity both shapes and strengthens the relationships between students, teachers, and music learning.

The next contribution, *An Online Community of Interns: Examining the Music Student Teaching Seminar in a Virtual Setting* by Christopher Baumgartner and colleagues, examines the challenges and benefits of sustaining a virtual community of practice for music student teachers. Their work deepens our understanding of how technology can support reflection, collaboration, and professional growth in teacher education.

Katri Kristiina Olander and Suvi Saarikallio's article, *Finnish music class studies and extracurricular playing in promoting grit and sisu, the inner fortitude*, situates music learning within the framework of resilience and wellbeing. Their mixed-methods study compellingly redefines *sisu*—the Finnish notion of inner strength—as a foundation for flow, growth, and flourishing among young learners.

Community and identity also emerge as central themes in *Approaches to developing community: A survey of the perspectives of American female undergraduate prospective band directors* by Kate Fitzpatrick, which examines the experiences and aspirations of women entering the band

¹Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, Ireland

²New York University Shanghai, Pudong, China

³Universidad de Zaragoza, Spain

Corresponding author:

Gwen Moore, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, V94 VN26, Ireland.

Email: Gwen.Moore@mic.ul.ie

directing profession. The study highlights the continuing need for mentorship, representation, and supportive professional networks for female-identifying music educators.

In *Music-Related Wellbeing as a Teaching Objective? A Critical Interpretive Synthesis*, Silke Sabine Schmid explores the conceptual foundations of music-related wellbeing in primary education. Her synthesis invites educators to consider wellbeing not as an implicit by-product of music learning but as an explicit pedagogical objective.

Equity and inclusion take a central focus in *Hidden Diversity in the Conservatoire: A Qualitative Enquiry into the Experiences of Higher Education Music Students with Disability* by Grace Thompson and colleagues. Through rich qualitative analysis, the authors highlight the voices of students with disabilities and call for systemic changes to make conservatoire education more inclusive and responsive to diverse learner needs.

Unlocking Sound: New Trends and Innovations in Intonation Education Over the Past Decade by Hui Lu and co-authors provides a timely review of research in intonation pedagogy. This comprehensive analysis identifies major developments in drone accompaniment, multimodal feedback, and practice strategies, while emphasizing the need for broader cultural perspectives beyond Western traditions.

Reflecting on the professional development of educators themselves, Colleen Conway's *Music Teacher Educator Growth Through Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (S-STEP) Research* offers a transparent account of self-reflective inquiry in teacher education. The article contributes valuable insights into how educators can better understand their students, curricula, and professional identities through S-STEP methodologies.

The importance of early musical experience is captured in *Playing by ear and the development of music skills at pre-school age* by Evi Andrioti, which applies Lucy Green's "playing by ear" approach to preschool settings in Greece. The study demonstrates how informal learning methods can nurture rhythmic development, collaboration, and autonomy among young children.

From a different sociocultural context, *Exploring Music Learning Needs of Working-age Individuals in Thailand* by Skowrung Saibunmi and Saya Thuntawech broadens the scope of life-long music learning. Their quantitative findings offer valuable guidance for designing programs that meet the learning styles, motivations, and barriers of adult learners in non-professional contexts.

Finally, *Music and Mathematics: Key Components and Contributions of an Integrated STEAM Teaching Approach* by Cristina González-Martín and colleagues examines the intersection of music and mathematics in Spanish primary classrooms. Their research demonstrates how integrated STEAM pedagogy can foster creativity, collaboration, and interdisciplinary understanding—skills essential for 21st-century education.

Taken together, the contributions in this issue exemplify the richness and relevance of contemporary music education research. They reaffirm that music, in its many forms and contexts, continues to serve as a powerful medium for personal growth, community building, and social transformation. We extend our sincere thanks to the authors, reviewers, and readers who make this ongoing dialogue possible.