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Celebrating ten years of ISME's *Revista Internacional de Educación Musical*: Music education research in Ibero-America

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Introduction

Rationale for this book: research in music education in Ibero-America

This edited book intends to celebrate ten years of *Revista Internacional de Educación Musical* (RIEM), a fully Open Access Spanish-language journal published by the International Society of Music Education (ISME) in partnership with Sage Publishers. During the past few years, RIEM has been co-edited by a team composed by the authors of this chapter, Rosa M. Serrano, Guadalupe López-Íñiguez, and José Luis Aróstegui, who have been responsible for the selection of a number of articles published in the journal during the past ten years that stand out for their quality and that, at the same time, offer a consistent vision of music education research in Ibero-America. That selection, which forms the content of the book, includes work from every issue published by the journal between 2013 and 2023 (first ten years of trajectory). Overall, the book aims to disseminate relevant work published by authors who have tackled the study of music education and a large part of its diversity in Ibero-America – typically written and published in the Spanish and Portuguese languages – that would otherwise go unnoticed by the international academic community whose common lingua franca for accessing research remains and has been, for a long time, English. The contributions to this book represent geographic diversity, gender balance, and a variety of career stages; for instance, the authors of the chapters are based in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Portugal, and Spain, and there is a large representation of female and emergent researchers.

Within the Ibero-American music education research landscape, there are several societies that have supported established and emerging music researchers and practitioners to further develop their work, among which we can identify five major ones: the *Foro Latinoamericano de Educación Musical* – FLADEM¹

(Latin American Music Education Forum), the *Sociedad para la Educación Musical del Estado Español – SEM-EE* (Spanish Society for Music Education),² the *Associação Portuguesa de Educação Musical – APEM* (Portuguese Association for Music Education),³ the *Associação Brasileira de Educação Musical – ABEM* (Brazilian Association of Music Education),⁴ and the *Centro de Investigação em Psicologia da Música e Educação Musical* (Research Center for Music Psychology and Music Education).⁵ Ibero-America constitutes one of the largest and most culturally cohesive linguistic regions in the world, with a strong sense of cultural community and social bond. Indeed, it is important to note that the demonym ‘Ibero-American’ refers to people from 19 Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries in Latin America and the three countries of the Iberian Peninsula.⁶ Thus, Ibero-America includes 22 hispanophone and lusophone states from America and Europe, as follows: Andorra, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Often, people use ‘Hispanic America’ to refer to this context, but that is only related to former Spanish colonies. It is in the spirit of this cultural cohesion and own linguistic entity that RIEM was founded, and thus, the journal also embraces the work of any person outside the community who speaks and/or writes in our *lingua franca*.

In addition to the cultural cohesion described previously, music education in the wide Ibero-American context has always been understood as a highly multidisciplinary discipline, traditionally linked to the study of other disciplines such as (neuro)psychology, sociology, philosophy, or musicology, for which there are several dozens of research societies and groups, as well as independent researchers. Indeed, the highly multidisciplinary approach of music education research in Ibero-America differentiates itself from the mainstream research published in Anglo-speaking countries, where music education separates itself more clearly from other areas, in several ways. For Ibero-American researchers, it is very common to use concepts which include a combination of disciplines, such as educational psychology of music, sociology/philosophy of music education, and the like. Thus, researchers in this area typically use multiple methodologies, including highly creative and innovative approaches to data analyses (due to the lack of access to data analysis softwares, for example), as well as knowledge of various disciplines to understand and develop educational aspects. In addition, Ibero-American researchers conduct research that resonates with similar issues in other contexts. However, they investigate and discuss other societal realities and inequalities than those highlighted in the mainstream. An example of this is the large (critical) focus on institutional transformation through the pioneering sociomusical programs typical of these contexts that have inspired music education practices around the world, as well as the pioneering of decolonial and feminist research studies. Another aspect that makes research in music education in Ibero-America unique has been the lack of state or private funding,

as this context includes many developing (third) countries, as well as countries with severe economic, political, and social crises. Thus, it is not uncommon that researchers in the area include highly creative, proactive, motivated, and innovative practitioners where carrying out research necessitates investing their own economic and time resources. As we outline in more detail shortly, the chapters in this book epitomise such creativity and innovation.

The areas of study that have seen significant developments in the Ibero-American context during the last five decades or so include the following: methodological aspects of research (due to its high multidisciplinary), pedagogical methods with a large focus on constructivist educational paradigms, pre- and in-service music teacher training (for both general schools and music schools and conservatoires), technology, creativity, innovation, performance and professional musicians' development, emotions and motivation, music therapy, interculturality and cultural diversity, social (in)equities and access to education, as well as inclusive education and public policy (e.g., Kleber, 2010; Pozo et al., 2022; Vicente-Nicolás & Sánchez-Marroquí, 2024). Many of these areas of study are reflected in this book, as the selected chapters seek to enhance and improve music education at different levels and in different contexts, with an ultimate vision of social transformation. Specifically, the book provides readers with a wide range of analyses and reframing of emerging practices and implications for music schools, higher music education, elementary and secondary schools, and other educational contexts in relation to a diverse and changing society. In particular, the book offers unique insights into research on sociomusical programs for the youth, global musicianship, innovations in higher music education and general schools, and approaches to music teacher training and development.

Democratising efforts to research dissemination: translations into English as science's lingua franca

As we outlined at the beginning of this introductory chapter, one of the goals of this co-edited book is to develop openness within contemporary music education discourses at international levels. The community of Ibero-American researchers is rich and diverse in languages – including a variety of mother tongues such as (mostly) Portuguese and Spanish, but also Aymara, Basque, Caló, Catalan, Galician, Guaraní, Mapudungun, Mirandese, Quechua, Tupi, Wayuu, or the many Amazonian languages. Since the lack of funding prevents many Ibero-American researchers from translating or language-editing their work, and we are not homogeneous in the use of a common language considering the diversity expressed previously, Spanish and Portuguese have naturally functioned as *lingua franca* for academic developments and outputs in Ibero-America. This has, at the same time, prevented us from accessing and publishing in international fora, but also has prevented international researchers outside of our large community from accessing our work. However, this challenge has not stopped the

proactive Ibero-American researcher community, and we definitely have done our best efforts with disseminating our research through translations into English, and also by including Open Access publishing practices into our daily life, but that has not been enough. Indeed, the access to research-based knowledge has language-imposed restrictions and boundaries.

While we access (and translate, if needed) English – and other languages – written works and widely cite them in our work, we see our work does not receive the same level of attention by researchers outside our context – especially if our published research has not been published in English, despite being Open Access. In that regard, we could sympathise with excellent music education researchers from Japan, China, Finland, Germany, or France, to mention a few, where high quality research is published in languages other than English and, thus, might go unnoticed by the mainstream community of researchers. Artificial intelligence might aid those researchers who only write and read in English in translating and accessing our research, but it also needs these researchers to understand the value of our work in order to proactively translate and access it (as we have done for decades). In other words, if additional language-related efforts are not carried out by English-speaking researchers, they will never be up-to-date with what is published elsewhere. To counteract such issues, we identified the need to publish a volume of previously published research that would be translated into English, so that it would raise awareness of the issues, methodologies, and implications for international contexts. We believe this volume raises critical awareness of the unjust access to and dissemination of science in many contexts, while at the same time, highlighting examples of what we, as editors with decades of experience as internationally recognised music researchers, consider inspiring research.

History of the journal

RIEM was an idea coined by Gabriel Rusinek (Madrid Complutense University, Spain) and José Luis Aróstegui (Granada University, Spain). As mentioned previously, they also considered that there was a poor representation of the Spanish-speaking world in music education research, due to the disadvantage that, on average, scholars from these contexts have in comparison with a wider international scope, usually suited to the Anglophone context. The first editor-in-chief of the journal, José Luis, identified a twofold problem with this. On the one hand, because fluency in English presents barriers for any scholar, the possibilities for publishing in relevant journals are much more limited than for those speaking English fluently. On the other hand, although reading English is, in principle, easier than writing, language is still a limitation to accessing quality research production in music education. In addition, the topics discussed in those papers are quite often based on distant contexts with no direct application to others. And without access to high quality research, it is difficult, if not impossible, to produce research. These two major reasons – language barriers

and research based on ‘local’ contexts – as well as the evidence of the very low number of quality fora to publish and disseminate music education research in Spanish made it necessary to create a journal dedicated to this topic. Moreover, the journal had to be open source because of exorbitant journal subscription charges for universities and because article processing charges (APC) are a serious limitation for scholars and universities based in countries with limited technological and economic resources.

To further develop and materialise such an idea, the most natural avenue to explore the idea was the International Society of Music Education (ISME). It was, and is, an exemplary forum because its mission and core values aligned with democratising production and access to high quality music education research in the Spanish language. This argument is valid for other languages, too, but Spanish is a special case as it represents one of the ‘world languages’ (Ammon, 2010) of the global world we live in – the two Western languages (English and Spanish) and two Eastern ones (Chinese and Arab), which have become hegemonic and global (Al-Salman, 2007).

The ISME board approved this proposal to create a new journal in 2011. We developed an open-source PKP platform, as usual in many other open access electronic journals, thereby minimising costs. Since editors, reviewers, and authors do not receive any payment – as is the case in most journals, whether they are fee-based or open-access journals – the journal was costed at approximately €150 annually. Further to the acquisition of an ISSN, the journal, with its humble initial infrastructure, was launched.

Because of ISME’s global membership and reach it was possible to seek out networks of mainly Ibero-American colleagues willing to take part in this venture and to form an editorial board. Thus, the first Editorial Board was formed with scholars based in Argentina, Spain, Portugal, Canada, Mexico, Israel, the United States, New Zealand, Brazil, the United Kingdom, and Colombia. While the number of countries denotes an intentionally wide geographical representation, a majority of Spaniards have been there since the beginning of the journal. While this is partially due to the need to develop and strengthen a more robust academic network in music education research in various contexts of Ibero-America, with the exception of Argentina and Brazil ten years ago, we have tried to assemble an editorial team in which no particular country is prominent.

Obtaining funding for establishing the journal and creating an Editorial Board were the most straightforward parts of launching RIEM, with its first issue published in 2013. However, it was certainly challenging to fill a brand-new journal with content when accountability pressure on scholars demands journal indexation in databases, impact factors, and other quantitative bibliometric indicators. We had to become creative and proactively think of more strategies to get enough high-quality papers published. Thus, we decided to translate some relevant articles from English and French into Spanish – the two first issues – and to promote special focus issues to guarantee enough original papers – the first one

launched in the third issue in 2015. While more special issues have been published since then, these were initiated by external colleagues further emphasising the interest and reach of engagement with the journal. Since then, the journal has received a steadily increasing number of submissions, enough to publish an annual issue (sometimes with more articles, sometimes with less, depending on how many were accepted for publication). This was the major difficulty that had to be overcome, which arose from the economic competitive thinking embedded in academia and the need to collect records for our academic biographies in an era of accountability (e.g., Macheridis & Paulsson, 2021).

This led to work on the indexation of the journal, which is important not only for such demands of accountability but also for the dissemination and credit of RIEM. This was also a challenge when the only team to do so was the Editor-in-Chief and the Assistant Editor, because inclusion in every database needs to be applied on a per case basis. Over time, the journal has been indexed or articles deposited in Google Scholar, ERA, EBSCO, DOAJ, Latindex, RILM, Dialnet, ERIHPLUS, MIAR, Clarivate's Web of Science, and JCR's Emerging Source Citation Index. It is said in a few words, but every acceptance implied to fulfil technical, formal and academic requirements. These included, for example, adding plug-ins in the platform, bibliographic requirements like including academic contact address of the first author requested by one company, as well as quality achievements expected to a greater or lesser extent, depending on each company or institution. The migration of the journal to the server of Sage publishers – a landmark in the history of the journal to increase its visibility, prestige, and support of certain tasks – meant that the platform settings had to be remade. This description not only refers to the work and challenges faced in establishing an independent new journal but also illustrates that indexing a journal requires certain conditions that are not always easy to meet. Indexing is a must to find an article in the mare magnum of the Internet, but it is also an enormous business in which new and independent journals can be very constrained.

Despite many challenges, we successfully led the development of an open source journal in Spanish dedicated to music education research in which scholars can publish no matter the economic situation of their universities, in which investigation refers to closer settings, in which neither readers nor authors have to struggle with the language as an additional barrier to publish a quality paper, and which is accessible and acknowledged as a reputed source of research dissemination, which aims to further increase its contribution to music education research in Spanish.

Structure of the book

Throughout these past ten years, many authors, contributors, and reviewers have believed in and supported this journal and the values and core mission it highlights. Many readers have also relied on it to learn, investigate, and base their

research. This book presents 13 of those articles, selected for their relevance and quality, and organised into four major sections. In addition, the book includes this introductory chapter by the journal's board of Co-Editors-in-Chief from the period of 2018–2023, as well as a concluding chapter by the current Co-Chair of the ISME Publication Committee, as an international scholar who can address music education research in and of Ibero-America in relation to the mainstream international perspective.

The first part of the book focuses on the theme 'Who and what is music education for?'. Improving music teacher training is essential for fostering quality of music education and the musical development of students, promoting student engagement, embracing inclusivity, adapting to technology, nurturing creativity, supporting ongoing professional development, building a strong music community, preventing burnout, and aligning with broader educational goals, among other reasons. Ultimately, investing in the training of music educators has far-reaching benefits for students, teachers, and the educational community. But not everything is appropriate in music teacher training, therefore, a critical and evidence-based point of view is needed to allow for optimal improvement. Thus, this first section of the book shows four varied contributions from music teacher training, from a contextualised reflection in different countries: Spain, Portugal, Brazil, and Argentina. In the first of the chapters, Fernández-Morante and Casas-Mas (2019) discuss the transformation of music teaching professionals into educational experts who are able to display and enact critical thinking. This is followed by the chapter of Mota (2015), who addresses the training of music teachers in Portugal from a critical perspective, with an emphasis on the possible dangers that may arise from a distorted vision, essentially driven by economic and political motivations, and with the absence of equal opportunities at social, economic, and political levels. Next, Ferreira and Carvalho (2014) focus on the analysis of the curricula of the History of Music subject in Brazil in music teacher training, with a critical view of both the content – centred on the Western European tradition – as well as the educational methodology used. Finally, Carabetta (2017) analyses the training models of music educators in the conservatoires of Buenos Aires. With the clear view that it is difficult to generate meaningful musical practices in classrooms with a high level of cultural and social diversity, their critical proposal offers a permanent dialogue between historical traditions, situated traditions, and the multiplicity of current musical experiences.

The second section of the book is titled 'Higher Music Education: Challenging Hegemony and Sustainability'. Improving higher music education based on scientific evidence is of vital importance to foster a thriving music scene, to train qualified musicians and to contribute to the cultural and artistic enrichment of society. Providing advanced training with exposure to diverse musical genres, traditions, and cultural influences to engage with a diverse global audience, promoting innovation and creativity or fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, are

some of the keys to improvement. Accordingly, this part of the book includes three chapters with interesting current educational and social challenges. In the first one, Viñuela (2018) reviews international developments in the inclusion of urban popular music in higher education, addressing some of the challenges of its standardisation. Then, Correa and Carbajal-Vaca (2021) focus on dropout rates from music university studies, analysing predictors of performance. Last but not least, Lorenzo de Reizábal and Benito (2020) deal with the concept of entrepreneurship and the importance of its introduction in higher music education (i.e., tertiary education).

The next two parts of the book focus on addressing current challenges in music education. In particular, the third part of the book, 'Transforming Teaching and Learning in Music Education', deals with common topics that need to be addressed from an innovative and critical point of view. Burcet et al. (2022) delve into the process of acquisition and appropriation of musical notation from the perspective of the learner. Carrillo and González-Moreno (2019) study student motivation through the expectations and values model of formal and informal music learning strategies in university students. Finally, Ramos (2013) examines the most relevant scientific literature in the field of stage anxiety associated with music performance; the author proposes actions that music teachers can use to combat this anxiety in their students.

The last section is titled 'Social Justice and Music Education: Challenges for Leadership and Sustainability'. Sociomusical programmes for young people, originating from various contexts of Ibero-America such as Venezuela's El Sistema, or Spain's municipal symphonic wind bands, include some aspects such as collaboration, peer learning and mentoring, inclusivity and cultural diversity, social justice and empowerment, or holistic development through music. This aligns with the broader aims of music education and can lead to a more engaging, inclusive and socially impactful learning experience. In this book, various authors analyse three different programs. Baker (2016) critically discusses the implementation of the music initiative 'El Sistema' in Venezuela. Bautista (2016), on his part, analyses critically the program 'Bandas Juveniles Musicales de Yucatán', in Mexico, derived from the Venezuelan program 'El Sistema'. Finally, Angel-Alvarado and Álamos-Gómez (2018) study the Chile-based 'Guitárregas' guitar ensemble program based on the self-determination of its musicians.

Final words

This book aims to share with the international English-speaking community some of the results of the *Revista Internacional de Educación Musical* that contribute innovative practices and insights from high quality research in Ibero-America. Featuring research studies from over ten years of the journal, this book takes a look at some of the most important articles from each of these years in relation

to four themes of international, contemporary relevance: music teacher training, higher music education, factors for improving music education, and sociomusical programs for the youth. They present critical perspectives grounded in theoretical and/or methodological rigour on music learning and teaching at different educational levels, both formal and non-formal, and from values as important as interculturality, inclusion, and social transformation, or aspects such as entrepreneurship or stage anxiety. This book therefore, promotes alternative and new dissemination of quality research, especially by authors whose mother tongues are mostly Portuguese and Spanish.

As stated in this chapter, two of the most important reasons that led to the creation of a new journal ten years ago, *Revista Internacional de Educación Musical* (RIEM), were related to language and economic barriers. Consequently, our aim was to address issues of social justice and democracy in order to make music education research more accessible for all. This book highlights the outputs of our efforts and illustrates how ISME and RIEM have not only enjoyed a fruitful collaboration but have also contributed to the development of structures and networks in support of music education and scholars in (but also outside of) Ibero-America and Spanish speakers in general. It is in the interest of RIEM to continue to foster the dissemination of quality music education research in Spanish. That is why we encourage the readers of this book to continue contributing to this journal, both as readers and, potentially, as authors and members of the review board.

Notes

- 1 www.fladem.org/.
- 2 www.sem-ee.com/.
- 3 www.apem.org.pt/.
- 4 <https://abem.mus.br/>.
- 5 <https://cipem.es.e.ipp.pt/>.
- 6 For more information, please consult the Pan-Hispanic Dictionary of Doubts (Real Academia Española y Asociación de Academias de Lengua Española, 2024).

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