Music Teacher Educator Perspectives on Social Justice

Karen Salvador[1] and Jacqueline Kelly-McHale[2]

Abstract

Given the shifting demographics in American education, the rising likelihood of students with special needs being taught in inclusive classrooms, and the increasing openness with which students are challenging gender and sex norms, social justice has become a prevalent research topic in music education. This survey sought to investigate the perspectives of music teacher educators with regard to social justice, music education, and music teacher education. Many of the 361 respondents indicated engagement with social justice and shared methods for addressing social justice topics in music teacher education as well as describing limitations that prevented them from doing more. However, about 50% of respondents defined social justice in "difference-blind" terms. A further 10% to 15% of respondents rejected the need to address social justice topics in music teacher education, stated it was not their job, and/or described social justice as a waste of instructional time that should be spent on content. In contrast, 10% to 15% of respondents expressed a desire for assistance understanding more about social justice in school music settings and/or suggestions how to teach about social justice topics in undergraduate music teacher education. This article concludes with a discussion of these findings and suggestions for future research.

Keywords

diversity, music education, music teacher education, social justice

Social justice is typically defined as the equitable redistribution of resources (Barry, 2005; Bell, 2007) as well as recognition of the "culture and identity of those who are marginalized and subjugated" (Hanley, Sheppard, Noblit, & Barone, 2013, p. 2). The

[1]University of Michigan, Flint, Flint, MI, USA
[2]DePaul University, Chicago, IL, USA

Corresponding Author:
Karen Salvador, University of Michigan, Flint, 126 French Hall, 303 E. Kearsley St., Flint, MI 48502, USA.
Email: ksalvado@umflint.edu

former definition stems from the idea of justice being tied to the responsibility of others to help those in need, while the latter emphasizes the importance of developing at least knowledge of and at best empathy for those who are "other." Each definition approaches the concept from a different starting point yet arrives at the same end goal: the removal of "social, economic, and institutional barriers . . . that constrain individuals' or groups' life choices" (Cochran-Smith et al., 2009, p. 375).

Historically, the aim of schooling in the United States has been to prepare students to be productive members of society and provide children with the knowledge necessary for success. Barber (1997) argues that public schools are "schools of publicness: institutions where we learn what it means to be a public and start down the road toward common national and civic identity" (p. 22). Thus, according to Barber, social justice is a pillar within the framework of American public education. The concept of the development of a "common national and civic identity" requires engagement of the diverse voices that make up the American public in a discussion of student and civic identity. To situate this study, we begin with an examination of the composition of schools and society. We then explore how social justice and social justice–related issues such as the ideas of equitable redistribution, knowledge, and empathy are presented in teacher preparation, music education, and music teacher education research. Although these concepts, issues, and definitions are applicable to a variety of settings around the world, the current article focuses on educational settings in the United States.

Diversity in Public Schools in the United States

In preparing teachers to work in 21st-century schools, teacher education programs are encouraged to address the reality of increasing diversity within the school-aged population. Diversity represented in public schools encompasses but is not limited to socioeconomic status, country of origin, language, religion, ability, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and race. With regard to socioeconomic status, poverty levels have risen among the school-aged population across the United States (Snyder & Dillow, 2012). School populations also reflect an increase in students from other countries: One in four students under the age of 8 has immigrant parents (Fortuny, Hernandez, & Chaudry, 2010). This diversity in country of origin is also associated with a rise in the number of students who are English-language learners, the variety of languages spoken in schools, and increasing religious diversity (Lippy, 2009).

Students also vary in ability, gender, and sexual orientation. Approximately 6.5 million U.S. children and youth ages 3 to 21 received special education services in 2011–2012 (Institute on Disability, 2013). Increasingly, students with exceptionalities are served in an inclusive classroom. With regard to gender, student populations are divided roughly 50/50 between males and females, but the dropout rate is much higher among males (Carrington & McPhee, 2008). Gender and sexuality continue to matter in education as interactions among students (e.g., Reay, 2010) and between teachers and students (e.g., Skelton et al., 2009) indicate differences in behavior and treatment of boys and girls in educational settings. Furthermore, students who are homosexual

or do not conform to gender norms experience bullying and exclusion in schools (e.g., Berlan, Corliss, Field, Goodman, & Austin, 2010; Carter, 2013; Elpus & Carter, 2016; McGuire, Anderson, Toomey, & Russell, 2010).

The racial composition of the American public school has diversified rapidly. In 1970, 80% of students enrolled in public schools in the United States were White, and by 2009, that number was just over 50% (Orfield, Kuscera, & Siegel-Hawley, 2012). In that time, Latino student enrollment rose from 1 in 20 to nearly one fourth of the school-aged population. However, this diversity is rarely reflected in individual classrooms, which are increasingly segregated:

> Eighty percent of Latino students and 74% of black students attend majority nonwhite schools . . . and 43% of Latinos and 38% of blacks attend intensely segregated schools (those with only 0-10% of white students) across the nation. *Fully 15% of black students, and 14% of Latino students, attend "apartheid schools" . . . where whites make up 0 to 1% of the enrollment*. (Orfield et al., 2012, p. 9, italics added).

This racial segregation combines with rising levels of poverty among school-aged children to create a concomitant increase in so-called double segregation, in which "millions of black and Latino students, but only a tiny fraction of white and Asian children, go to schools where almost everyone is poor" (Orfield et al., 2012, p. xvi). For students from immigrant families, this double segregation can be made worse by language segregation, when schools serving high numbers of non-White students in poverty also serve high numbers of English-language learners. Thus, the increased diversity of the school-aged population overall is often not reflected in individual schools.

Social Justice and Teacher Education

In response to the effects of poverty and segregation on education and the increasing diversity of student populations, a number of studies describe content and approaches to preservice teacher education and in-service teacher professional development regarding issues of social justice (e.g., Chubbuck, 2010; Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; Pollack, Deckman, Mira, & Shalaby, 2010). However, individual teacher education programs vary widely on how they define the information, dispositions, and abilities required to effectively teach a diverse student population (for extensive review, see Hollins & Guzman, 2005). Although these studies indicate a deep commitment to education for social justice in a few specific teacher education programs, researchers have not investigated the extent to which teacher educators across fields of practice view social justice as an issue. Literature on this topic identifies criticism leveled against inclusion of social justice as a topic of teacher education, including allegations of "thought control . . . political screening . . . and teaching a progressive political catechism" (Villegas, 2007, p. 370). Such a critique could indicate that some teacher educators are not in agreement that issues of social justice should be addressed in initial teacher preparation.

Social Justice in Music Education

Music education researchers have examined issues related to social justice in music education in terms of access to music instruction in public schools, PK–12 music educators' beliefs about diversity and cultural responsiveness, and inclusive practices in school settings. Elpus and Abril (2011) found that students who participated in traditional high school music ensembles (i.e., band, orchestra, and choir) were statistically more likely to be from White, middle- to upper middle-class families regardless of school location. Studies also indicate significantly lower rates of participation in secondary performing ensembles among students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) than among the general high school population (E. C. Hoffman, 2011; Linsenmeier, 2004).

While the aforementioned research focused on schools that offer music programs, Salvador and Allegood (2014) reported a lack of structural access: Schools with high proportions of non-White students were less likely to offer any music program whatsoever. Focusing on a more cultural aspect of access, Butler, Lind, and McKoy (2007) argued that the existence of a music program in a school does not necessarily mean that all students in the school have equitable access to instruction. Studies of the experiences and perspectives of music students (e.g., Carlow, 2006; Carter, 2013) support this assertion, as does A. R. Hoffman's (2011) practitioner-focused article on religion in music instruction.

Salvador (2010) investigated how undergraduate programs prepared music teacher candidates to work with exceptional populations in music settings. Though 29.6% required a course and 59.8% reported consistent integration of this topic throughout music education, 23.9% of institution responses indicated no such course was offered or available and that the topic was not integrated into instruction in a consistent way. The implications of this finding are reflected in a number of studies indicating that course work focused on exceptionality offered in tandem with immersion experiences working with students who had special needs increased undergraduate music education students' comfort levels with people who had differing backgrounds and abilities and also resulted in students being more likely to confront people who were being intolerant (Bartolome, 2013; Hourigan, 2009; Standley, 2000; Whipple & VanWeelden, 2012).

These results are not consistent, however, with findings regarding differences in socioeconomic status and racial/ethnic diversity. In a survey of 406 undergraduate music education majors, Kelly (2003) reported that although 75% of respondents had completed a course on cultural diversity that included a field component, most preferred to intern and teach in schools like the ones they had attended: predominantly White, middle-class, suburban public schools with strong music programs. Similarly, in a survey of 337 students from 36 colleges and universities in the United States, McKoy (2013) concluded that "the community setting of the school in which preservice teachers conducted their early field experience practicum and student teaching [did] not affect their cross-cultural competence to a significant extent" (p. 388).

Purpose and Problems

Given the shifting demographics in American public education, the rising likelihood of students with special needs being taught in inclusive classrooms and the increasing openness with which students are challenging gender and sex norms, social justice in PK–12 classrooms and teacher education programs has become a prevalent research topic in music education. Researchers have described promising practices (e.g., Abril, 2009; A. R. Hoffman, 2011; Kelly-McHale, 2013; Shaw, 2012), related historical precedents (e.g., Gustafson, 2009), discussed philosophical arguments (e.g., Bowman, 2007; Kindall-Smith, McCoy, & Mills, 2011; Koza, 2008), and revealed demographic trends with regard to music education and race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability, country of origin, and socioeconomic status (e.g., Elpus & Abril, 2011; E. C. Hoffman, 2011; Salvador & Allegood, 2014). However, in music teacher education (as in general education), researchers have not attempted to ascertain the prevalence or nature of social justice education in music teacher preparation or the extent to which social justice is valued or understood by teacher educators. Learning about teacher educators' perceptions of social justice topics in PK–12 and teacher education settings is an important step toward increasing access, inclusion, and equity in school music instruction. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the perspectives of music teacher educators with regard to social justice and music education. Specifically, how do music teacher educators define social justice in their own teaching or in PK–12 schools? Do music teacher educators view the inclusion of social justice frameworks as relevant in undergraduate music teacher education curricula? What are the limitations to the inclusion of social justice frameworks in music teacher preparation programs that music teacher educators perceive?

Method

Participants

We sent a survey to full-time tenure-track music teacher educators currently employed by an institution accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). Using the online NASM Institutional Directory (NASM, 2014), we sorted to identify all institutions accredited to certify music teachers in undergraduate programs. From this list of 473 institutions, a research assistant utilized each institution's website to identify every full-time, tenured, or tenure-track music teacher educator. We defined faculty as music teacher educators based on two or more of the following criteria: (a) identified on the institution's website as music education faculty, (b) duties included student teacher supervision and/or seminar, (c) taught any type of music education introduction/seminar/foundations/topics, (d) taught methods course(s)—but not only of a single instrument or group of instruments, and/or (e) research interests included educational topics.

We piloted this protocol on several randomly selected institutional websites to ensure it could be applied consistently. After identifying a music teacher educator, the

research assistant recorded each potential respondent's name and email address. If in doubt about whether a person met our criteria, the research assistant was instructed to err on the side of including a potential participant. Then, we revisited each website to clean this original list of 1,064 names and email addresses, culling: (a) faculty no longer working for a particular institution (e.g., had retired and/or relocated), (b) faculty who had strong teacher education credentials but were no longer teaching music education coursework (e.g., were now administrators), (c) faculty who appeared to be music education faculty but upon further investigation did not teach music education course work (e.g., studio faculty who were listed under music education but only taught a single instrument methods course), (d) part-time or non–tenured/tenure track faculty mistakenly included, and (e) faculty on a sabbatical or other leave and sending auto-replies at time of survey launch. This process resulted in a pool of 858 potential respondents for this survey.

Survey Design

The first section of the survey asked about participants' demographic information, including gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status (SES) growing up, highest completed degree, years of PK–12 teaching experience, years of experience teaching music teacher candidates, courses taught, and size of undergraduate music education program. We asked respondents if they were satisfied with their coverage of social justice issues in their instruction of preservice teachers and if anything was holding them back from doing more. To examine music teacher educators' perceptions of social justice, we asked them to define social justice, and we also constructed a Likert-type scale adapted from Bryan, Clark, Drudy, Gallagher, and McEvoy's (2009) study of Irish educator attitudes toward social justice. Participants responded to prompts regarding issues related to social justice by using a 5-point slider anchored by 1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree.* Five prominent scholars in the field of social justice in music education piloted the survey and confirmed ease of use, face validity, and construct validity. The survey is available in the online version of the article.

A Cronbach's alpha procedure for all items revealed internal consistency of .73. Two factors embedded in the Likert-type items, related to curricular views and societal views, were initially determined by the researchers and then tested post-survey using Cronbach's alpha procedure. The two factors were named Curricular Views About Social Justice (CVSJ) and Societal Views of Social Justice (SVSJ). The Cronbach alpha scores for the CVSJ and SVSJ factors were reported at .82 and .71, respectively. Therefore, internal consistency for the survey and for the determined factors met DeVillis's (2003) recommendation of an alpha value at .7 or better.

Data Analysis

Data analysis methods included both quantitative and qualitative techniques. We used percentages to analyze demographic information and other characteristics of respondents. We also used percentages to analyze responses to multiple-choice items.

The Kruskal-Wallis test of independent samples was used to explore whether there was a main effect between (a) demographics and (b) setting/experience on views of social justice. We used nonparametric procedures because the data were not normally distributed, as assessed by the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality ($p = .05$). There was also a right skewness visible in the histogram. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was also violated, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances, $p = .009$. Due to the parameters of the Kruskal-Wallis H test, seven tested characteristics were identified and run individually: (a) gender = male, female, transgender; (b) SES = lower third, middle third, high third, no response; (c) race = majority, minority, no response; (d) music teacher education experience = 1–10 years, 11–20 years, 21+ years; (e) PK–12 experience = 1–5 years, 6–10 years, 11–20 years, 21+ years, no PK–12 experience; (f) university/college setting = rural, suburban, urban, no response; (g) university/college affiliation = public, private, religious, no response. The race/ethnicity characteristic was collapsed into the majority/minority category due to the small response rates across the various options (McKoy, 2013). The no response option was provided because of the desire to help respondents feel that they could be anonymous due to the possibility of social desirability bias. Because 63 respondents answered "don't know/haven't thought about it" to all the Likert-type questions, their responses were not used for this analysis.

For open-response questions, we used inductive and deductive analysis. Inductive analysis involved cleaning the data (removing identifiers and empty space, unifying fonts, etc.), close reading of the text, creation of categories, and continually revising and refining these categories through multiple sets of coding, allowing overlapping coding and uncoded text (Thomas, 2003). We analyzed the item regarding how participants defined social justice first. We thought that participants' views about what social justice is would color their thinking regarding other questions and would therefore provide the best place to start. After an initial list of themes emerged from this analysis, each response was coded as the theme it best represented, resulting in a list of five "frames," with exemplar quotes. Subsequent open-response questions were subjected to both deductive analysis on the basis of these frames as well as the inductive data analysis we described previously. Numbers and percentages regarding open-response items represent proportions of the total number of participant responses, not the total number of items coded. That is, a single participant response could "count" in the percentage of more than one category.

Results

Characteristics of Respondents

Of 858 possible participants, 356 completed the survey for an overall response rate of 42%. Respondent characteristics are presented in Table S1 (available in the online version of the article). Survey participants reported being predominantly White, middle third economic background, and holding a PhD or equivalent. With regard to gender, 52% of respondents reported as female and 47% as male, while one respondent identified as transgender. These data are consistent with the 2014 Higher Education Arts Data

Summary (HEADS) with the exception of gender, where the percentage of full-time male faculty outpaces full-time female faculty 69% to 31%. Participants varied in years of experience teaching in PK–12 contexts and years of experience as a music teacher educator. Respondents reported teaching at a variety of institutions. Of those who responded to this item ($n = 323$), most taught at public colleges or universities (65%, $n = 210$), while 16.4% ($n = 53$) taught at private schools with no religious affiliation, and 18.6% ($n = 70$) reported their school was religiously affiliated. Of 298 respondents, 41.6% ($n = 124$) categorized their institution as urban, 29.8% ($n = 89$) saw their institution as suburban, and 28.5% ($n = 85$) categorized it as rural.

Perspectives on Social Justice in Music Teacher Education

Definitions of social justice. Out of 356 total participants, 302 (84.8%) chose to provide a definition for social justice. Inductive analysis of these definitions revealed five main themes. We coded each response as the theme with which it most closely aligned, and responses could carry more than one code. The themes can be described as frames through which respondents viewed social justice: (a) equal treatment/equal access/equal opportunity, which included subthemes of fair/just treatment is not the same as equal treatment, and meritocracy; (b) accepting people as they are/celebrating difference; (c) critical, which included subthemes of suggestions for action and moral/ethical imperative; (d) learning/questioning; and (e) challenging/dismissing.

About half of the respondents ($n = 166$) framed the definition of social justice in terms of equal treatment/equal access/equal opportunity. These responses centered around ideas that all people should be treated the same, regardless of any difference, or that opportunities should be the same for all people, regardless of any difference. Exemplar statements in this frame included "Equal rights and opportunity for all" and "No notice of gender, race, ethnicity, economic background, or sexual preference." Within this frame, a subset of definitions stipulated that same treatment was not necessarily equitable treatment. Another subtheme among respondents within this frame indicated that social justice is, as one participant stated, "A meritocracy, in which . . . the important factors become talent, intelligence, and hard work that result in achievement."

A second frame defining social justice was accepting people as they are/celebrating difference. The 39 (12.9%) responses coded in this frame centered on ideas of embracing diversity and a strong sense of the values of multiculturalism in education. Within this frame, diverse ways of thinking and being were considered strengths for society. For example, one participant stated, "Social justice, to me, is working toward a society that honors the contributions of all members of that society and works to find ways to value all unique contributions."

Respondents ($n = 67$, 22.2%) who defined social justice through a critical frame focused more on institutions, power systems, actions, context, morals, and ethics. A brief example is "Social Justice is a disposition to perceive injustices in society and the courage to act against these injustices." Critical definitions focused on actions (e.g., "Social Justice is creating equal access to opportunity. This is achieved not through liberalist ideas of 'equity' but through dismantling of institutional barriers to access,

including racism, sexism, classism, heteronormativity, ableism, transphobia, etc."). The critical frame also included moral and ethical consideration:

> When I consider "social justice" I think of the moral, ethical responsibility I have as a member of society to see the value in each person. Privileged individuals sometimes find it difficult to reach out to others because we see "differences" in others rather than commonalities that cross social status boundaries. I may not hold the same views as someone else or practice the same faith or orientation, but I have a responsibility to treat every other person I encounter with respect and dignity. I strongly believe social justice teachings (aka how to behave "morally and ethically") have a place in school systems.

Ten responses (3.3%) were best classified through a frame of learning/questioning. Some of these respondents had not engaged with the topic of social justice: "I honestly have no idea. The term is foreign to me." Other respondents in this theme had encountered the topic but were not yet ready to define it: "I have no current working definition—just some ideas that are not well-formed" and "I feel that I do not hold a strong grasp on the concept of social justice."

Finally, 17 responses (5.6%) seemed to challenge or dismiss the invitation to define social justice. Responses in this category included "I don't" as well as several versions of "I would have liked for you to do it." However, some of the challenges were more of a rejection of the need to discuss social justice in music teacher education: "Not really sure. I believe life and success are up to you and you alone. I don't have time to teach this and music too—I hear sociology is an interesting field for those who are so inclined."

Teaching about social justice topics. Several questions addressed social justice topics in the music teacher educator's practice. Forty percent of 285 respondents reported on a yes/no item that they were currently satisfied with their coverage of this topic in their instruction of preservice teachers. When we asked participants to select multiple options to describe what if anything held them back from being satisfied with their coverage of social justice in music education courses, 65% of respondents indicated lack of time, 29% lack of knowledge, 29% nothing, and 5% were concerned about tenure. Ten percent cited lack of interest or felt it was not their job. When participants were asked to add any thoughts in response to this question, 113 respondents chose to elaborate.

Frequently shared frustrations included a lack of funding/time/availability of good clinical sites for fieldwork, along with increasing demands placed on teacher educators and teacher education programs by accreditation and testing. Another common response to this question was articulated by this respondent: "I don't feel the music education profession is doing enough to prepare teachers to be leaders in this field. We need more clinics, workshops, and classes designed to lead the way." Along with this call for more professional development, many responses indicated a willingness to teach the topic but voiced a lack of expertise (e.g., "I've never been exposed to social justice learnings, so I don't know where to start!"). Finally, 12 of these 113 participants clarified that their high satisfaction reflected a conscious choice not to cover

social justice topics at all: "This would take away from the time for teaching music content. I leave to the Political Science courses or History, etc." Some who were satisfied with not covering the topic had more ideological reasons for not including it. For example, one participant stated,

> I do not believe that we as music educators need to teach lengthy units on social justice. For example, LGBTQ is none of our business and has NOTHING to do with one's education. This being the case, to teach a course or even a lengthy unit on such a topic is essentially a waste of time for undergraduates, and rather should be reserved for masters or doctoral coursework. Teaching social justice is as easy as saying "We are all equal, and should be treated as such. We should celebrate our differences as much as we celebrate our similarities. In the end, we are all human beings." End of story. I just saved myself a week of time to talk about more important topics such as music selection, instructional behaviors, and curricular issues.

Effective means of communicating about social justice issues. Seventy-nine percent of respondents (*n* = 285) shared one or more strategies they find most effective as a means of communicating about issues of social justice. Many respondents reported field experience was most valuable:

> [Students] need to live it. This is not something you can talk about effectively, because it is not just cognitive, but procedural and emotional. They need to feel, taste, smell, and live what it is like to work in these classrooms and THEN be empowered with the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be an agent of change.

Respondents indicated that several types of discussion were effective. These discussions were often linked to fieldwork experiences. Other types of discussion included conversations about student journals of their own experiences, discussion of case studies, and current events/news related to social justice. Respondents also recommended bringing in (or Skyping with) teachers from urban and low-SES areas. Several specified that students must take on various perspectives or make a decision regarding what must be done in the hypothetical situation for discussions to be most effective.

Respondents suggested that readings, modeling, film/documentary, and sharing personal experiences can all be effective in communicating about social justice. Respondents additionally recommended readings regarding current events, the role of music in social justice, ethnographies, critical theory, and the concept that "actions speak louder than words." Finally, several respondents stated that the most effective social justice instruction is embedded throughout music education coursework, as is expressed in this response that sums up many of the strategies listed previously:

> Teaching by example; teaching with cases; responding to incidents of uncivil behavior in wise and principled ways. Finding ways to uncover and dislodge prejudice and narrow-mindedness without strident tone or undue pressure. The music education faculty considers social justice as one of our primary goals, and this shared commitment across classrooms and individuals is a valuable asset.

Nine respondents used this open-response item to reiterate the view that teaching about social justice is not necessary or not their job; for example, "I don't. Politics should never enter the classroom."

Current impediments to social justice in PK–12. Two hundred eighty-five respondents (79% of total respondents) chose to list factors that they consider to be impediments to social justice in PK–12 education. For 102 participants (35.8%), issues of money and time came to the forefront: "School funding based on local property taxes creates large inequalities between rural, urban, and suburban music programs. . . . Performance traditions that include expensive instruments, expensive uniforms, and expensive participation fees exclude lower income families." With regard to time, 22 respondents (7.7%) specified an increasing focus on standardized testing and "tested subjects" as disproportionately affecting certain groups of students and also as resulting in less music instruction for certain groups of students.

Twenty-six respondents (9.1%) pointed to a lack of diversity both with regard to the homogeneity/segregation of school populations and to the lack of diversity in graduates from teacher education programs:

> Students coming from privileged backgrounds being "certain" that they want to teach in similar situations. There may also be a lack of potential school placements where music ed[ucation] students can experience inner city culture and children. Many students come with preconceived notions about children from poverty backgrounds and shy away. Some really want to teach complex music to capable students and feel that they will not be able to do this in urban or rural schools. Also there are safety concerns in many city schools that are daunting to some undergrads.

Perhaps related to this perceived lack of diversity, respondents mentioned the elite and exclusionary nature of admission into college and university music education programs. Thirty-five respondents (12.3%) focused on the viewpoint that music education has limited itself in a way that does not serve social justice:

> The field of music education could do more to break away from the traditions of the past 40 years. Euro-centric materials of band, chorus, and orchestras do not invite greater participation in the musical community. Furthermore, we could do more to sensitize our students to the changing demographics of the students they will teach. Many music education majors are of the majority culture, and find themselves unfamiliar and incapable of dealing with students different than themselves.

About half of the respondents (*n* = 124) also pointed to a number of larger systemic/institutional factors that they viewed as impediments to social justice in PK–12 public schools, listed here by one respondent: "Income inequity/Poor education policy/Corporate reform agenda/Charter schools/Attacks on teachers unions/Privatization of public education/ Racism and homophobia." However, 41 respondents (14.4%) identified a different set of larger issues centered on the need for more competent teachers and/or better preparation of teachers.

Additional experiences respondents would like to incorporate. Of the 251 respondents who listed additional experiences they would like to incorporate in their instruction, 52 (20.1%) involved some aspect of fieldwork. Specifically, respondents suggested more fieldwork, in more diverse placements, and with better preparation, reflection, and debriefing regarding differences in race, ethnicity, primary language, ability, and SES. Ten respondents (4%) also stated that they would like to incorporate more readings (particularly case studies). Both in isolation and also in mentioning field experiences and readings, 47 respondents (18.7%) indicated a need to pay more attention, be more explicit, and be more open with students about social justice topics. Twenty-seven respondents (10.8%) identified a need for more time. Nineteen respondents (7.6%) stated that this topic must be embedded meaningfully throughout coursework. However, 31 respondents (12.4%) gave responses that were coded as "nothing/not applicable" like this one: "It is, in my opinion, outside the scope of a music education course to teach social justice topics." Thirteen responses (5.2%) revolved around ideas of activism: "Spend more time in the public schools assisting poorly trained music educators. Sponsor university-based programs for marginalized populations in the surrounding community." Finally, 15 responses (6%) were best categorized as "don't know/help me"; for example, "Help me know what should be taught regarding social justice!!!" and "Learn more about the issues and how k–12 music classes might help address them/further meet the needs of all children in every community."

Results From Likert-Type Items

We used a Kruskal-Wallis H test to determine differences in CVSJ and SVSJ scores across demographic and setting characteristics.[1] Distributions of the CVSJ and SVSJ scores were not similar for all groups though they did show a positive skew on all runs of the data, as assessed by visual inspection of a boxplot. A legacy procedure was run to determine the mean rank for each characteristic. The mean ranks of the CVSJ and SVSJ scores were not statistically significant ($p < .05$) between demographic and setting characteristics (see Tables S3 and S4 available in the online version of the article). An examination of the medians that resulted from the Kruskal-Wallis H test show that the CVSJ scores across all characteristics ranged from 4.33 to 4.78. Conversely, the median scores for SVSJ ranged from 2.75 to 3.75. This study did not reveal any relationship between characteristics of participants or their settings and the SJSV and CVSJ factors.

Discussion

Limitations

This survey faced several limitations that must be considered in interpreting the data. First, this research potentially was impacted by a selection bias from our use of the NASM list to find participants. Faculty at schools that are not NASM accredited but that still certify music teachers may have different characteristics and/or ideas about social justice than respondents to our survey. Furthermore, using the NASM list meant

that we limited participants to only music teacher educators currently working in the United States. This survey also had a potential nonresponse bias: the possibility that people who did not respond to the survey did not view the topic as important. Therefore, the 42% of those contacted who did respond may have caused the results to skew more toward a view that reflected knowledge of and/or positive feelings about issues of social justice in music teacher education. Finally, there was a possibility of social desirability bias: that participants responded how they think they "should" have responded (Krumpal, 2013). Our use of an anonymous online format was intended to mitigate potential for social desirability bias. We also strove to be "distanced" or neutral in our wording of items, and respondents were allowed to abstain from answering some questions.

Characteristics of Respondents

The current study indicates that music teacher educators seem to be overwhelmingly highly educated, White, middle-class men and women. Respondents indicated a range of years of experience in higher education, and nearly all also had substantial PK–12 experience. In analyzing across the open-response portions of the survey, two overarching themes seemed to relate to the characteristics of the respondents. The first was that respondents cited lack of diversity within the music education profession as hampering efforts to make music education more relevant to and supportive of a wider cross section of the American student population. Respondents pointed out that audition requirements and application procedures necessitate that undergraduate music education students must come from a home in which private lessons are available on a specific range of instruments/styles of music. Successful applicants also likely attended a secondary school with a music program. The second underlying recurrent theme was the idea that social justice issues are irrelevant in music education and/or that music teacher educators are not the people who should be teaching undergraduate music education students about this topic. Data across responses revealed a perception that addressing social justice in music teacher education would result in preservice teachers learning how to teach their PK–12 students about social justice instead of music. While teaching music as social justice activism is a possibility that is described in the literature (e.g., Elliott, 2007), social justice lessons for preservice teachers could focus on information about demographic realities in American schools and promising practices for school music pedagogy that is responsive to students with a variety of backgrounds and needs.

Perspectives on Social Justice in Music Teacher Education

Respondents' definitions of social justice were grouped into five thematic categories: (a) equal treatment/equal access/equal opportunity, which included subgroups of fair/ just treatment is not the same as equal treatment, and meritocracy; (b) accepting people as they are/celebrating difference; (c) critical, which included subthemes of suggestions for action and moral/ethical imperative; (d) learning/questioning; and (e) challenging/ dismissing. In respondents' definitions of social justice, the ideas that all children

should be treated the same regardless of any difference, that effort and ambition are enough to rectify unfair treatment, or that there is no place within the curriculum for the inclusion of social justice ideals appeared in the themes of equal treatment/meritocracy and challenging or dismissing. Williams and Land (2006) define "colorblindness" as practices in the classroom that seek to continue to perpetuate the dominant group's primacy and efforts to bring all students to "the normalized White standard" (p. 579). These ideas are rooted in the concept that good teaching is effective for all students and that content and pedagogy determine success (Finney & Orr, 1995; Sleeter, 1994). The current survey findings reveal that this "blindness" extends to more facets of diversity than race, including gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. The difference-blind perspective on music pedagogy among some respondents to this survey could provide a key to understanding descriptive research concerning the make up of music education programs in the PK–12 context. The majority of students who participate in music programs across the United States come from White middle-class backgrounds (Elpus & Abril, 2011) despite the diversity found in their schools (Butler et al., 2007). Furthermore, students with IEPs are underrepresented (E. C. Hoffman, 2011; Linsenmeier, 2004). The demographics of the American music student contribute to an underlying narrative or hidden curriculum that music programs are for White middle- and upper-class students who have no academic deficiencies. Students who do not fit this profile often do not last in music programs outside of compulsory general music instruction in the elementary years—if such programs are even available in their school, as schools with higher proportions of non-White student enrollment were less likely to offer music programs (Salvador & Allegood, 2014).

Analysis across all open-response items consistently revealed this colorblind or difference-blind perspective on social justice. Throughout the survey, 10% to 20% of respondents asserted that they had no interest in teaching social justice topics, that it was irrelevant, and that it was not their job—the job of a music teacher educator is music content and pedagogy. The content-driven nature of music education, as opposed to more focus on student identity and experience, contributes to the colorblind perspective described by Williams and Land (2006). As some respondents asserted, the drive toward standards-based teaching and standardized testing could perpetuate this problem. Another indicator of difference-blindness across the open-response items was that in general, responses focused on socioeconomic status and racial diversity or used the blanket code "urban" to indicate settings with a number of non-White and/or poor students. Although there were some responses that also touched on sexuality and gender, issues of religion, country of origin, and ability largely were ignored. More than 50% of the definitions of social justice were coded in the "difference-blind" categories (equal treatment and challenging/dismissing). Among the remainder of the open-response items, the percentage dropped to 10% to 15%. It is important to recall that a possible bias of this survey is that respondents who felt better informed or had more positive perceptions of social justice may have self-selected to respond and also that social desirability bias may have led respondents to say what they thought the authors wanted to hear (Krumpal, 2013). Therefore, this perspective of difference blindness may be more prevalent in the music teacher education profession than this survey revealed.

A majority of responses across items focused on pluralistic practices and critical theory. Respondents described the need to work toward eliminating barriers to participation in school music and embracing ideals found within multicultural and culturally responsive paradigms (e.g., Foster, 1995). Participants also offered thoughtful analysis of impediments to social justice in PK–12 settings, an array of possible methods for communicating with students about social justice, as well as insight regarding what holds music teacher educators back from doing more to teach preservice music educators about social justice. The fact that 79% of respondents added comments to the survey regarding impediments to teaching about social justice suggests that the desire to discuss the role of social justice is present. It also suggests that there is a need for a realignment of thought that would empower teacher educators and teachers to develop a more student-centered focus in the classroom. That 65% of respondents indicated time was a factor in their lack of satisfaction in their coverage of this topic begs the question of why we prioritize music content skills and knowledge over the development of teacher candidates' ability to more effectively engage students with a variety of needs who come from a variety of backgrounds.

Finally, analysis across items revealed that many respondents want more information, resources, and professional development on this topic. This was evident as respondents indicated that they were not sure how to define social justice, stated that they were not sure how to broach the topic effectively with undergraduates, and expressed a desire to learn more. Responses also indicated a perception that practicing music teachers need instruction regarding culturally responsive pedagogy and other aspects of social justice in PK–12 music education.

Conclusion

Schools are social institutions, established to perpetuate the goals of a democratic society, and must be viewed in that manner in order that they may be maintained and flourish. The reality for music teacher educators in the United States is that PK–12 schools are more diverse now than previously and that this trend will continue (Orfield et al., 2012). It is important to note that this study did not examine the impact of teacher education in social justice on classroom interactions or student outcomes but only provides a picture of the views that music teacher educators hold of social justice in music education. The picture includes conflicting views of the definition of social justice, the need for social justice instruction in the undergraduate curriculum, and the impediments to a more socially just PK–12 music education experience. However, the qualitative and demographic data in the survey provide a springboard to action within the American music teacher educator community.

Further research that investigates the confluence of music teacher educator and music education candidate views on social justice is needed. Such research might expand the definition of music teacher educator to include adjunct faculty, doctoral students, and/or music teacher educators at schools that are not accredited by NASM. The applicability of the current study to contexts outside of the United States should be considered, as should ways to define and investigate similar concerns in music teaching and learning contexts abroad. These studies should be followed closely or paired with studies that look at the intersections between music teacher educator views of social

justice and music teacher candidate practice within fieldwork, student teaching, and the first 5 years of teaching. The goal of such research might be to determine the influence of college professors on the practice of in-service and new teachers regarding socially just teaching practices and develop a broad understanding of what social justice looks like in music classrooms. To address the need for professional development or more information on social justice articulated by respondents in this survey, such research must be reported to the music teacher education profession and preservice and practicing teachers in a way that supports growth and invites participation.

If music education is for everyone, then those who hold the responsibility of teacher education must prepare music teacher candidates who are ready to teach all students. This requires the profession to extend and reframe the ways in which music teacher candidates perceive quality, equity, and justice within PK–12 contexts—not only for the ways "diversity" traditionally has been viewed (race, SES) but also for students who are LGBTQ, have a variety of (dis)abilities, are from different countries, speak languages other than English, and/or practice a religion other than Christianity. Music teacher educators must take on the challenge to discover and create socially just models of music instruction. In the words of one respondent, "[social justice is] . . . a multifaceted jewel worthy of and requiring individual and collective mindsets prioritizing policy and action—lived experiences—that promote the actualization of each person's humanity." Music education can be one way to approach this goal.

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Supplemental Material

The supplemental materials are available in the online version of the article at https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429417690340.

Note

1. Descriptive statistics for each Likert-type item are provided in Table S2 (available in the online version of the article).

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Author Biographies

Karen Salvador is an associate professor of music at the University of Michigan, Flint, where she coordinates the music teacher certification program. Her research focuses on equity and inclusion in music education, including instructional practices, policy, and music teacher education.

Jacqueline Kelly-McHale is an associate professor and director of music education at DePaul University. Her research interests include culturally responsive music teaching and learning and the development of social justice frameworks in music teacher education.