

Teaching multicultural music in elementary school:

Issues about what, when, and how to teach:

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ABSTRACT / this study explores the views of Greek School Advisors for Music Education on specific issues concerning the teaching of multicultural music in elementary school. The study seeks answers to what, when, and how to teach, focusing especially on contrasting approaches, implementation considerations, and dilemmas posed to the music teacher. The data were mainly collected through semi-structured interviews and classified into categories using content analysis. The results indicate that world musics should be taught from an early age alongside Greek music, which, however, will occupy the central place in the program. The instruction should involve students actively and also include appropriate non-musical information linking the music with its sociocultural context. The musical selections should, as a starting point, take into consideration the diverse backgrounds of the class, but ultimately they should go beyond them, expanding the students' experiences and horizons.

Keywords: multicultural music, multicultural music curriculum, elementary music education, implementation issues, teaching approaches.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization, the vast increase in intercultural communication and interaction, and the cultural diversity in today's classrooms create a demand for a new orientation in education and the implementation of school programs that will adopt global perspectives and promote intercultural understanding and respect.

Reflecting this need, a great number of music scholars have highlighted the increasing significance of multicultural music education and provided various rationales – musical, social, educational, demographic, and more – for the inclusion of world musics in the school music curriculum (Anderson & Campbell, 1996; Dodds, 1983; Fung, 1995; Glidden, 1990; Kraus, 1967; Miralis, 2009; Reimer, 1993). Over the past decades multicultural music education has grown in importance, and many music educators have suggested approaches or provided guidelines for structuring and presenting a multicultural music program in the classroom (Anderson & Campbell, 1996; Gamble, 1983; Goodkin, 1994; Jorgensen, 1998). Despite all these suggestions, many implementation issues remain unclear and often disputed among scholars, posing dilemmas to music teachers, who are largely left to devise their own ways of teaching multicultural music (Klinger, 1996; Weidknecht, 2011:18).

One such dilemma that teachers have to address is whether they should include in their instruction the examination of the music's sociocultural context. This issue is highly debated among scholars and practically relates to the purpose of multicultural music education: Should world musics be studied for their aesthetic value and beauty, or for the cultural information they can reveal? Some scholars claim that the gain from every music study lies in music itself, and that everything else surrounding the music is less important (Campbell, 1995:46, 2004:215-216; Reimer, 1972:30; Rideout, 2005:40). Thus, they advocate an *aesthetic approach* to world music instruction, namely an approach that focuses on the study of the musical elements of the diverse musical genres and aims at improving students' musical knowledge and skills. On the other hand, several others understand music *as* culture and support the *sociocultural approach*, which studies world musics in conjunction with their sociocultural and historical background, and centers on the understanding of how music is shaped within its context, on the meanings it has for its creators and listeners, and on the ways it reflects their ideas and lifestyles (Campbell, 2004:215-218; Chen-Hafteck, 2007:337-338; Rideout, 2005:40). These scholars argue that such an approach adds depth to the understanding and appreciation of the music itself, while also helping students to explore the many cultures of the world and their diversity (Campbell, 2004:216-218; Dunbar-Hall, 2005; Nettl, 1992; Wa Mukuna, 1997; Walker, 1996).

Another consideration for music teachers is when to start teaching world musics. At what age should students be brought into contact with the diverse musics of the world? Further, should they first master their own musical culture, before they move on to others? As to the first question, some music educators suggest that children should be exposed to world musics as early as possible, since an early exposure will familiarize them with the sound of these musics and prevent the development of negative attitudes towards foreign musical genres (Anderson, 1983; Campbell, 1995:41; Dekaney & Cunningham, 2009:50). The opposite view is advocated by Smith (1983:31), who argues that, because the understanding of a foreign culture is a difficult issue, multicultural music education is not appropriate for very young children and should begin only when students are mature enough to handle it. Scholars' opinions diverge on the second question too. According to Miller (in Campbell, 1994:20), teachers should introduce students to world musics from the very beginning and in parallel with the teaching of their familiar musical tradition, so that no one music becomes the standard by which all others will be measured. By contrast, Glidden (1990:8-11) and Smith (1983:31) suggest that the teaching of students' own musical culture should precede the multicultural instruction, claiming that

if students have acquired some basic musical skills in the context of their own tradition, they will more readily understand the musics of other, less familiar cultures.

Teachers must also make decisions about the breadth of the multicultural music program and the depth of the study. Should students study many musical cultures, or fewer but in greater depth? Elliott (1990:164) maintains that only a curriculum that allows students to explore a wide range of diverse musical cultures, comparing and contrasting concepts and practices, will give them the opportunity to understand and profit from the multiple ways people throughout the world experience music. Androutsos (1998:158) also advocates the several-cultures approach but on the basis that an in-depth presentation of fewer musical cultures requires more specialized knowledge on the part of the teacher. On the other hand, Campbell (2002:31), Miller (in Campbell, 1994:23), and Yung (in Campbell, 1995:41) deplore a hasty and superficial tour of many musical cultures and argue that a study of fewer cultures in greater depth will be of more value to the students.

Another concern is the content of the program. Which musical cultures should be studied? Scholars' views vary on this issue too. Fung (1995:39) and Miralis (2009:103) suggest that the teaching of world musics should start with the musical cultures that are related to the cultural and ethnic composition of the class or exist in the local community. Huang (1997:29-30) recommends the study of non-Western musical genres that are in some way connected with the musics that are being taught in the standard curriculum. Some other scholars highlight the synthesis of Western and non-Western elements in the work of several composers and musicians of the 20th and 21st century, as also in many contemporary musical genres such as pop, rock, or avant-garde jazz, and say that these musics can provide an appropriate platform for the multicultural journey in the classroom (O'Brien, 1980:42; Seeger, 1992:28-29; Walker, 1996:12-13).

Music teachers are also uncertain about the extent of world music instruction in the curriculum. What percentage of the total teaching time should be allocated to foreign musics and what to the national or the Western musical culture? Although several scholars claim that there is time in the curriculum to both preserve Western art music and integrate other musical genres of the world (Campbell, 1992:40-41; Glidden, 1990; Huang, 1997:33; O'Brien, 1980), they rarely provide more detailed instructions. In fact, only Glidden (1990) suggests a specific art education program that combines multicultural and Western content and could be used as a balanced teaching plan through the various school grades.

Lastly, teachers who are willing to integrate world musics in their classes are often unaware of effective teaching techniques and activities through which they can do so. While it is true that numerous music educators, such as Anderson and Campbell (1996), Goodkin (1994), and Shehan (1988), have provided guidelines and ideas for the teaching of multicultural music in the classroom, these suggestions are not always easily applicable or effective in every country's educational setting.

In Greece today, despite the new educational needs created by globalization and the growing cultural diversity in Greek society and schools, the implementation of multicultural perspectives in music education is practically non-existent, while the content of school music programs remains largely limited to Greek art and Western classical music. But even when teachers *are* aware of the benefits of multicultural music education and willing to include world musics in their programs, they have to find

their own answers to many application issues, such as the aforementioned, all the more so because there is an almost total lack of related research in the Greek context.

With all the above in mind, this study examines the views of Greek School Advisors for Music Education on specific issues regarding the teaching of world musics in elementary school. The study focuses on contrasting approaches, implementation considerations, and dilemmas posed to the music teacher, aiming to provide suggestions that could facilitate the structuring and application of a multicultural music program. Moreover, it intends to add to the existing international bibliography examining approaches and strategies for teaching multicultural music in elementary school.

The study draws on the data of a broader research conducted in Greece in 2013, which aimed at investigating the Music Advisors' views on various issues concerning the implementation of a multicultural perspective in Greek elementary music education. The findings that will be examined in the current paper address the following research questions:

1. Should the teaching of world musics in elementary school include a parallel study of the music's sociocultural context?
2. At what age should children be brought into contact with world musics, and should they first master their own musical culture?
3. What should be the content, breadth, and depth of world music instruction, and what percentage of the total curriculum should such instruction occupy?
4. What teaching approaches and activities are the most appropriate for integrating world musics in the elementary music class?

In the context of this article, the terms *multicultural music*, *musics of the world*, *world music(s)*, and *world musical cultures* are used interchangeably to denote the musics of the diverse cultures of the world, while the term *multicultural music education* refers to the use and teaching of these musics in music education.

2. METHOD

2.1. Participants

The 15 School Advisors for Music Education who are responsible for all educational regions in Greece were invited to participate in the study; ten responded positively (response rate 67%). The research sample was representative of the entire Greek territory, thus improving the generalizability of the results.

Music Advisors are music educators who are selected every four years and are responsible for specific educational regions. The main criteria for their appointment are their professional qualifications and significant teaching experience, as also their university studies, research projects, and publications. Their role is to provide music teachers with pedagogic and scientific guidance, support their every-day teaching needs, and organize training courses for them, as also to encourage all research in the field of education and promote the advancement of new, effective teaching methods.

Music Advisors were deemed the most appropriate population for this research on the grounds that they are highly qualified music educators and also fully knowledgeable about the actual needs and limitations of music education in Greek public schools.

2.2. Data collection and analysis

A qualitative approach was selected for the research. Specifically, semi-structured interviews were employed as the main data collection method, in order to allow for an in-depth examination of the participants' views and obtain rich information (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007:361). To add consistency, an interview guide was used in the interviewing sessions. This guide was also transformed into an open-ended questionnaire and mailed to three Advisors who were unable to attend a live interview. However, in order to preserve the qualitative nature of the research, after the initial collection of the questionnaires, the researcher communicated with these three Advisors repeatedly, asking them to elaborate or clarify some of their statements, until the information collected was sufficient and unambiguous.

A similar procedure was followed in the case of the interviewees. That is, after the transcription of the interviews, the texts were sent back to the respective Advisors, so that they could verify them and make any changes they deemed necessary. Where clarification was needed, additional questions were included in the texts. This practice, whereby the participants themselves are invited to confirm the data, is called *member-checking* and considered as contributing to the trustworthiness and credibility of the research (Seidman, 2006:98).

All data were analysed using *content analysis*, a common method for analysing qualitative data, by which "the many words of texts are classified into much fewer content categories" (Weber, 1990:15). In the present study, the unit of analysis used was the *theme* (Cohen et al., 2007:477-478). Hence, the data were thoroughly studied until specific thematic patterns of meaning were identified (Patton, 2002:453-454). These themes were next classified into categories, some of which were designed in advance and, where necessary, modified to fit the data, while others were constructed during the analysis process.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Should world musics be studied in conjunction with their cultural context?

Should the teaching of world musics in elementary school focus exclusively on the study of the music (*aesthetic approach*), or should it include a parallel study of the social, cultural, and historical context in which the music is created and experienced (*sociocultural approach*)? According to the data, all but one Music Advisors tended to the view that, to a smaller or larger extent, a parallel examination of contextual issues surrounding the music is recommended, mainly for two reasons:

The first is that music does not exist in itself, but rather is inextricably linked to the sociocultural and historical conditions that surround it, and is always a reflection of such conditions. These surroundings determine not only the particular features of music but also its functions and meanings for each human group. It is therefore essential that the teacher attempt to present music in the class as

a natural part of its broader context, by using appropriate material (e.g., projects, visual aids, new media) and providing background information about society, history, religion, art, everyday life, and so forth.

The second reason for studying the music along with its context is that the sociocultural information and the "stories" behind the music arouse the interest of the students and help them to better understand an unfamiliar musical style, to perceive its role in each culture, and to connect emotionally with the individuals who create it. Moreover, a study of the context enhances students' knowledge about other cultures and can contribute to the development of intercultural relations within school society.

Two Advisors recommended a scaled approach, which will proceed in parallel with the students' age, knowledge level, and maturity. Specifically, they said that at preschool and first elementary grades the teacher must use an aesthetic approach, presenting the music alone with very little (or no) background information. In the following years he/she can gradually increase such input, in line with the child's age and ability to process additional data and make comparisons. Two other participants stated that both approaches (aesthetic and sociocultural) are important, and that the teacher can focus on either at different times, depending on the educational goals.

In any case, all the above Advisors agreed that examining the context does not undermine interest in the music itself - which remains the core of the lesson - nor downgrades music as an art; on the contrary, integrated into its real environment, music becomes more appreciated.

Some participants stressed that foreign musics and cultures must not be approached through a "folkloric" viewpoint, as if they were something strange and exotic, to avoid reproducing stereotypes and bias. They also said that information about society and culture must not be presented in the form of dry encyclopaedic facts. Such information must be interesting, educationally useful, and connected with real life, and students must explore it through active and creative channels.

Only one Advisor took a definite position in favor of the aesthetic approach. This participant maintained that the teaching of multicultural music in elementary school should aim exclusively at providing a broad range of aural stimuli to the students. In his view, a cultural study can follow later, in high school.

In summary, the prevailing view among the Advisors was that although the music itself should be kept at the center of the study, a parallel examination of the sociocultural context is necessary, in order for the music to be placed in its natural setting and be better understood by the students. This view is entirely consistent with that of several music educators and scholars (Bieber, 1999:38; Campbell, 2004:216-217; Dunbar-Hall, 2005; Fung, 1995:39; Smith, 1983:31; Wa Mukuna, 1997), who say that the aesthetic and the sociocultural study are not mutually exclusive and suggest that the teachers use a combined and balanced approach in order to meet both learning goals for their students. The need for a study that will include the parallel exploration of contextual issues is also confirmed by research findings (Abril, 2006; Chen-Hafteck, 2007; Edwards, 1998), which demonstrate that a combination of the two approaches allows students to yield the most positive effects of multicultural music education. It is noteworthy, though, that for the participants in this study there are certain essential conditions that must be met when studying the musics' context: (a) the non-musical information provided to the

students must be relevant, educationally useful, and appropriate to their age-based abilities; and (b) the approaches used for the exploration of contextual issues must involve students in experiential and creative ways, and also show respect for the different cultures.

3.2. When should the teaching of world musics begin?

What is the most appropriate age for children to be introduced to world musics? Seven out of 10 Advisors expressed the view that exposure to the diverse musics of the world should start very early: in the first elementary grades or even at preschool. Some of the participants supported their position by saying that, when at early age, children are remarkably receptive to every kind of music, even to strange and unfamiliar ones, since they have not yet developed stereotypical views about which musics are “good” and which not. This receptiveness seems though to wane markedly when they reach adolescence. Therefore, if children do not become familiar with a foreign musical culture at an early age, it will be harder for them to accept it later. These views are in keeping with those of many music educators (Anderson, 1983; Campbell, 1995:41, 2002:31; Dekaney & Cunningham, 2009:50), and also supported by research (Brittin, 2000; LeBlanc, Sims, Siivola, & Obert, 1996), which indicates that, indeed, younger children seem to be more “open-eared” and tolerant towards various music forms, and that this tolerance declines in adolescence.

Some of these Advisors further specified that the very young children (at preschool and in the first grades) should be brought into contact with world musics exclusively through aesthetic and experiential approaches, for example by improvising, mimicking, playing, or moving to the different musics. Such contact may also be used by the teacher to instill into young children ideas of equality, multicultural harmony, and peaceful coexistence of all people.

On the other hand, three Advisors said that no concrete rules as to the proper age should be set, arguing that the experiential nature of the music class poses no age limitations; therefore, the world musics can be taught and learned at any and all ages.

3.3. Should students first learn their own musical culture?

Should students first master their own musical culture, before they move on to others? This question provided quite consistent responses among the participants: Eight out of 10 tended to the view that children can be introduced to world musics from the very beginning, without it being necessary for the teaching of their familiar musical culture to precede. Some provided the argument that, by definition, people always have listening experience of their own musical culture from a very early age. As a result, when entering school, a child with a normal degree of socialization already knows some things about its own music. Therefore, the teacher can take advantage of young children’s openness to different styles and easily teach world musics from the start. Similar views are expressed by Nettl (1992:5-6) and Miller (in Campbell, 1994:20), with the latter stressing that if the teaching starts with Western music, children will never get to know the other musical genres of the world in an unbiased way.

At the other end of the spectrum lie the views of two participants, who believed that students should first acquire some knowledge of their own musical tradition and then proceed to others, on the grounds that it is reasonable for a child to start learning about what is familiar and natural to it, and then move on to explore more distant fields. An instruction that starts with the children’s own musical

culture is also advocated by Glidden (1990:8-11) and Smith (1983:31), who nevertheless provide a different rationale: They argue that one will more readily understand and appreciate a foreign music if one has first studied one's own musical culture and understood its rules, elements, and structures.

Lastly, some Advisors from the first group noted that, since every class is different from any other, the teacher may each time make different decisions about when and how the teaching of world musics should begin.

3.4. Should the study involve many musical cultures or focus on just a few?

In a multicultural program, should students be brought into contact with a broad spectrum of musical cultures or study fewer but in greater depth? On this issue, the participants' opinions rather varied, not pointing clearly in any certain direction.

More specifically, half answered that the teacher is the one who must decide how many cultures should be studied, taking into account the particularities of each class (e.g., the interests and the capabilities of the specific students), the learning objectives, the time available, and his/her own knowledge and skills in the area of multicultural music.

Other participants recommended the teaching of a moderate number of musical cultures as more fitting for elementary school, adding though that the study of each need not be in much depth. Some argued that a large number of different musical genres could be confusing for children at this age. An Advisor suggested that the teacher should present two or three musical cultures, without going into much depth, and then occasionally add a few songs from other cultures, so that students get a general idea from them too. Another suggestion was that teachers begin with presenting a small number of musical cultures in the first grades, and in the following years they gradually add some more, increasingly distant in terms of aesthetic characteristics and geography.

Two Advisors offered a contrasting view, by advocating the study of a broad spectrum of musical cultures as the most appropriate for elementary school; again, the study need not be in great depth. One Advisor explained her opinion, by saying that elementary ages are ideal for giving children many stimuli, and that the teacher can then familiarize them with many different musical genres. Such familiarization will help students become multi-musical, namely acquire the ability to understand, evaluate, and perform several different types of music.

It is interesting to note that, despite their differing opinions, none of the respondents recommended an extensive, in-depth study of musical cultures, mainly taking into account the young age of the children and the lack of available time. This point is quite significant, since it may encourage music teachers who, having no specialized knowledge of world musics, prefer to avoid this field altogether.

3.5. Which musical cultures should be taught?

With what criteria or reasoning should the teacher select which musical cultures to include in a multicultural program? Responding to this question, most participants agreed that, when selecting the content of such a program, a factor that must always be taken into account is the cultural composition of the class. According to this viewpoint, the teacher must include in the program musics from the countries that the foreign students represent, in order to come closer to them, help them feel

accepted, and give them an opportunity to be taught - or sometimes be initiated into - musical genres of their place of origin. One Advisor even recommended that the musics presented in the classroom should reflect the cultural origin of all students, whether from foreign countries or from particular regions of Greece. Similar views have been frequently recorded in the literature; many scholars consider it logical for the multicultural instruction to start with musical cultures related to the ethnic and cultural composition of the class, then proceed to musics existing within the local community, and lastly extend to more distant world cultures (Fung, 1995:39; Miralis, 2009:103; Sakellaridis, 2008:89).

Some Advisors suggested that in selecting musical cultures teachers should also take into account whether they have the knowledge required to teach them correctly, and whether they can find appropriate and sufficient teaching material. Another view was that teachers should choose musical genres that they are personally fond of, so that they can convey their enthusiasm to the students. By contrast, two participants disagreed entirely with this latter suggestion, arguing that the teacher must always function on the basis of the students' needs, not on that of his/her own preferences.

According to another participant, the musical cultures can be selected and studied through a geographical approach, whereby the teacher will first present geographically proximate musical cultures and gradually move to more distant ones.

Lastly, one Advisor argued that all musical cultures of the world without exception are welcomed and can be utilized in such a program, since the point is to help students accept them all as equally important and valid.

3.6. What percentage of the program should foreign musical cultures occupy?

What percentage of the total curriculum should be allocated to foreign musical cultures? Should Greek and Western music occupy - or retain - the central place? Faced with this question, eight out of 10 Advisors either clearly stated or indirectly indicated their wish for Greek music to have the dominant position in the curriculum. Only two Advisors advocated an equal presentation of all world musics.

More specifically, four participants were of the opinion that Greek music should hold the central place in the program, taking up half or more of the total teaching time (some suggested 50-60%), with the rest being allocated to the other musics of the world. It is noteworthy that all four did not consider that Western art music should have a more important position in relation to other world musics, but that it should share equally with them the remaining part of the program.

By contrast, another four participants stated that the Western musical tradition should also have an important role in the program, second to Greek music or even sharing with it top priority. These Advisors also differed from the first group in that they allocated a rather low percentage (25% or less) to foreign, that is non-Greek and non-Western, musical cultures. Three, however, added that the proportion of foreign musics might be higher when there are foreign students in the classroom.

These findings are not really surprising. Previous research indicates that most music teachers consider the teaching of the musical culture of their own country as their top priority, while many attach great significance to Western classical music too (Green, 2002; Legette, 2003). The data provided by the second group of Advisors, in particular, seem to confirm the conclusion reached by Legette

(2003), that “some music educators may view multicultural music education as an add-on component rather than a basic part of the curriculum” (p. 57).

Only two Advisors expressed the opinion that it is not necessary for Greek (or any other) music to occupy a prominent place in the curriculum, and stated that all musical cultures can be utilized equally, in terms of the time we allocate to them. Every musical genre is music, argued one of these Advisors, adding that the teacher’s role is to open for his/her students as many doors of musical expression as possible and show them many different roads, so that they can later choose their own.

In addition to the aforementioned views, two Advisors stressed that, irrespective of any general rules, the proportions of the various musics in the curriculum must not be inflexible, but that the teacher must adapt them depending on the specific class, the circumstances, and the educational needs of that living organism we call school.

3.7. Instructional approaches and activities for the integration of world musics in the curriculum

The Advisors indicated several teaching approaches and activities through which music teachers can integrate world musics in the elementary music curriculum. Many recommended the use of a video as a very good way for the first presentation of a musical culture in the classroom, on the grounds that visual material reveals aspects of the music’s context (place, people, costumes, instruments, etc.), which capture the students’ interest and help them better understand the various musical cultures and their creators.

Students can also experience the musics of the world through singing songs, listening to recordings, or attending live performances (e.g., by members of the community or by the students themselves), through a study of the various types of musical instruments found worldwide, as well as through movement activities such as dance or moving to music. A suggestion concerning singing was the teaching of songs that represent different world cultures but have the same function or subject (e.g., about childhood, nature, freedom). As for listening, it was stressed that for this to be effective and interesting, it must not be passive; students must participate actively, for example by accompanying rhythmically or melodically the piece they listen to.

World musics can also be taught through interdisciplinary approaches in collaboration with the classroom teacher or with teachers of other art classes. In this case, students will study the music of a people, while also learning about its history, geography, literature, or its other artistic expressions. In an even broader approach, music may be examined in tandem with many aspects of the specific culture, namely as part of a holistic cultural study. Cooperative learning activities can also be used, whereby the students will work together in teams to prepare and present a project of their own, inspired by the music of a specific culture.

Some Advisors suggested organising events that would utilize world musics and showcase the multicultural society of the school. Such happenings help foreign students feel welcomed and can facilitate their integration into the school community.

Lastly, several Advisors mentioned that it is better to apply a combination of approaches rather than only one, and emphasized that in order for the multicultural music instruction to have a real,

quality impact, the activities and approaches used must involve the students actively and allow them to obtain first-hand experience of world musics.

3.8. Recommendations for the introduction of unfamiliar musics

Unfamiliar musical styles from some distant cultures cannot always be readily appreciated by the students. However, all Advisors agreed that it is up to the teacher to identify suitable techniques and make appropriate musical selections, in order to familiarize children with these “strange” musics and avert potential negative reactions.

To this end, the Advisors recommended that teachers wishing to apply a multicultural program should begin with musics that are easy and familiar to the students, and gradually move towards more difficult and alien ones. In particular, they suggested that the initial musical pieces should contain relatively simple and familiar melodic and rhythmic patterns, so that the children can easily sing or play them on the classroom instruments. It would also be advisable to ensure that these initial selections are relevant to the sociocultural and musical experiences and preferences of the students. Such choices can be pieces from neighbouring or related musical cultures (e.g., the Balkans or the Mediterranean), songs from various cultures having the same subject matter or function (e.g., about nature, work, marriage, religion), or even “world pop” songs, that children generally enjoy and which often incorporate elements from the traditional musics of the various peoples. After these first steps and by applying appropriate teaching strategies, for example inviting the students to compare and identify similarities and differences between different musics, teachers can gradually lead their classes to less familiar musical styles.

Many of these recommendations are also present in the literature. Shehan (1986:161) for example, recommends the use of simple folk songs featuring a repetition of melodic and rhythmic patterns as a very good way to introduce young children to a foreign musical culture, while stressing the importance of active participation through singing and instrument performance. Also, Demorest and Schultz (2004:310), having researched children’s preference for different versions of world musics, conclude that world pop music, with its blending of Western and non-Western musical elements, can provide an appropriate starting point for the exploration of musics from unfamiliar cultures in the classroom.

The participants cited some more simple techniques for the introduction of foreign musics. They said that an attractive presentation of the novel musical culture supported by visual aids (e.g., a video), a classroom discussion in advance that will arouse interest about this new music, or an activity in which the children will be prompted to intervene creatively in the music, for example change the words of the “strange” song, improvise through movement, or invent facial expressions, can help shape a more positive attitude towards unfamiliar genres.

Some Advisors made the important point that teachers should try to learn about their students’ experiences and preferences, and be aware of their capabilities and cultural background, in order to make the correct musical selections each time. Two participants also mentioned that if the students are strongly negative towards a particular music, the teacher should not persist, but rather try to find other musical examples, which will arouse their interest. By contrast, some other respondents were confident that no issues of negative reaction to new musics are likely to occur at elementary school, since at these

ages what is familiar and what is not has yet to be determined; what is more, young students often find the strange sounds of remote musical cultures interesting and intriguing, and have no difficulty in accepting them.

It is very significant that almost all participants stressed that although the selections of music should at first take into account the children's experiences and backgrounds, ultimately they should go beyond them, introducing students to new and different musical styles and cultures. This point was deemed a decisive and crucial one by these Advisors, who argued that an essential precondition for the success of a multicultural program is that this should not stay limited to the students', the teacher's, or the system's framework. Such programs must transcend the children's experience, take them further, and broaden their aesthetic and creative horizons.

4. CONCLUSION

Engagement with the diverse musics of the world has been widely acknowledged as promoting intercultural understanding and also improving students' musical knowledge and skills (Anderson & Campbell, 1996; Fung, 1995). As multiculturalism in school classrooms becomes increasingly evident and intercultural contact grows rapidly, many music teachers worldwide are attracted by the idea of including world musics in their teaching programs. Yet, the fact that several implementation issues of multicultural music education remain ambiguous or disputed in the literature compels these teachers to invent their own isolated teaching ways, or discourages them entirely. This problem is even more marked in Greece, a country in which multicultural music education is an unexplored area, and the relevant research is extremely limited. In the light of all the above, this study explored the views of Greek School Advisors for Music Education on specific issues concerning the teaching of multicultural music in elementary school.

The findings indicate that the teaching of world musics should begin at an early age and run in parallel with the teaching of Greek music, which, however, will occupy the central place in the program. The instruction should also include non-musical information linking the music with its sociocultural and historical context, provided that such information is relevant, educationally useful, and according to the students' age-based abilities. The approaches used for the study must involve students in active and creative ways and, at the same time, respect and showcase the value of each culture. Students might be brought into a first contact with a musical culture through a video and then explore it through singing, listening, movement, and other musical or interdisciplinary activities. The musical selections should, as a starting point, take into consideration the diverse backgrounds and capabilities of the class, but ultimately they should go beyond them, introducing students to new musics and experiences and showing them new paths of aesthetic pleasure and creation.

Certain limitations should be acknowledged in the study. Firstly, the participants constituted two-thirds of all Music Advisors, and so conveyed the experience connected with the same proportion of Greek schools and music teachers. Secondly, the participants' views mainly referred to the Greek educational system and its sociocultural context; therefore, the outcome should not be generalized in other educational and cultural contexts without caution. Despite these limitations, the findings of the study provide some basic guidelines and ideas for the infusion of world musics into elementary music education. Clearly, additional research is needed to throw more light on how to structure effective

multicultural music programs and to remove dilemmas concerning their application, thus facilitating the work of music teachers who wish to include world musics in their teaching.

That is not to say that teachers should be left alone to search out, interpret, and apply in their classrooms the findings of such research. Rather, the findings should be used by those who design school curricula for the development of model programs, which will specify what should be taught, and when and how it should be taught, and also include the appropriate teaching materials. Such structured programs will help teachers become much more confident in teaching multicultural music and allow students to reap the full benefits of this kind of education.

Moreover, the results of this study show that, irrespective of any guidelines, several crucial decisions in the course of the implementation of a multicultural music program are necessarily left to the judgment of the teacher. It follows that an essential precondition for the success of such a program is that music teachers have acquired appropriate knowledge and skills in the area of world musics through pre-service or in-service training. As Jorgensen (1998:80) points out, only when teachers thoroughly know their subject, can they teach it well.

The integration of world musics in the music class seems to be a pressing global challenge for the 21st century, "a century certain to be filled with complex cultural choices and increasing international and intercultural interdependence" (Anderson & Campbell, 1996, p. x). Although this study dealt with only some of the issues concerning the teaching of multicultural music in elementary school, it is hoped that music educators in Greece and elsewhere will find it useful and motivating for their practice and research. Future studies should continue to seek ways through which music teachers will help their students experience and welcome the wealth and beauty of the different musics and cultures of our world.

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