

Advocating for Indigenous Music in Latin American Music Education

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Abstract : European colonization had a profound impact on Latin America. The influence of the old continent can be perceived in the culture, religion, and language of the region, as well as the beliefs and attitudes of the population. Music education is not an exception to this phenomenon. With Europeans controlling cultural life and erecting educational institutions across the continent for several centuries, Western European Art Music (WEAM) has polarized music learning in formal spaces. In contrast, the music from the indigenous population, the African slaves, and the ones that emerged as a result of the cultural mélanges have largely been excluded from primary and secondary schooling. The purpose of this paper is to suggest the inclusion of indigenous music education in primary and secondary music education. The paper employs a philosophical inquiry in order to achieve this aim. Philosophical inquiry seeks to uncover and examine individuals' unconscious beliefs, principles, values, and assumptions to envision potential possibilities. This involves identifying and describing issues within current music teaching and learning practices. High-quality philosophical research tackles problems that are sufficiently narrow (addressing a specific aspect of a single complex topic), realistic (reflecting the experiences of music education), and significant (addressing a widespread and timely issue). Consequently, this methodological approach fits this topic, as the research addresses the omnipresence of WEAM in Latin American music education, the exclusion of indigenous music, and argues about the transformational impact said artistic expressions can have on practices in the region. The paper initially addresses how WEAM became ubiquitous in the region by recounting historical events and addressing the issues other types of music face when entering higher education. Subsequently, the research explains the issues faced by prospective music educators who do not practice WEAM. The study then lays the framework for the inclusion of Indigenous music and conclusively offers examples of how the musical expressions from the continent can improve the music education practices of the region.

Keywords : indigenous music education, postmodern music education, decolonization in music education, music education practice, Latin American music education

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