





Towards academic excellence in the training of music educators: challenges and perspectives

Hacia la excelencia académica en la formación de educadores musicales: retos y perspectivas

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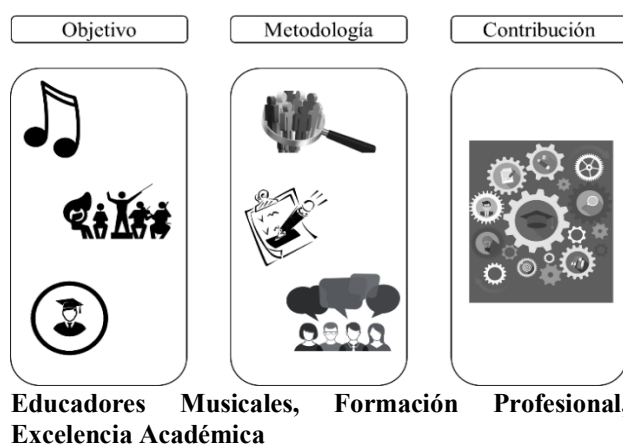
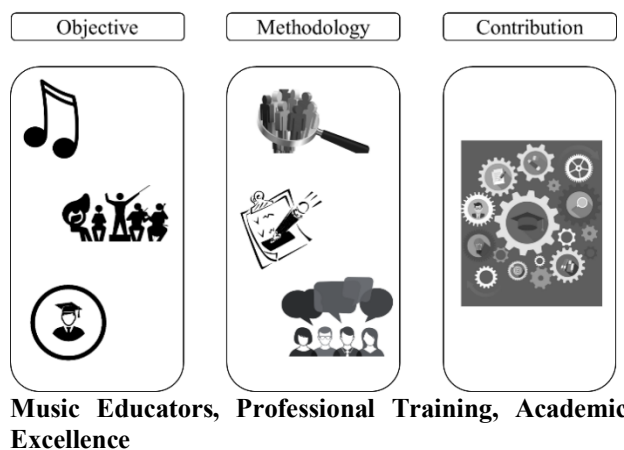


Abstract

The importance of music in shaping individuals since antiquity is undeniable. Recognizing the significance of music education for human development, some governments have incorporated music and other arts into their educational systems, considering it beneficial for students' holistic development. This is the case in Mexico. In this paper will present a research project that begins with identifying needs in the training of music educators at a public university, specifically within the Bachelor of Music program, at the Music Education specialization level. A qualitative methodology will be used, encompassing curriculum evaluation and gathering feedback from current and former students, with the aim of contributing to the improvement of this disciplinary training and fostering academic excellence among future professionals in this field.

Resumen

Resulta indiscutible la importancia que se le ha concedido a la música en la formación de las personas, desde la Antigüedad. Reconociendo esta trascendencia de la educación musical para el desarrollo humano, algunos gobiernos han incluido en sus sistemas educativos el aprendizaje de la música y de las demás artes, considerando que favorece el desarrollo integral de los estudiantes. Tal es el caso de México. En este trabajo se dará cuenta de un proyecto de investigación que parte de la identificación de necesidades en la formación de educadores musicales en una universidad pública, específicamente con el programa educativo de Licenciatura en Música, en su salida terminal de Educación Musical; mediante una metodología cualitativa, desde la evaluación curricular y la recuperación de voces de estudiantes y egresadas, con fines de aportar al mejoramiento de esta formación disciplinar y contribuir a la excelencia académica de los futuros profesionales en este campo.



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Introduction

Music, closely linked to education, has played a fundamental role throughout history. Since ancient times, prominent Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle have attached great importance to this art in the education of citizens. Similarly, music was included in the Quadrivium as part of the liberal arts in the Late Middle Ages, alongside arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. More recently, ‘musical intelligence’ has been proposed as one of the multiple intelligences, and music studies have been incorporated into the field of neuroscience.

Considering this relevance, there are higher education courses in Mexico dedicated to training music educators, so that they can contribute to fostering the qualities that the Ministry of Public Education [SEP] itself identifies as contributions of music: for the harmonious development of all faculties, listening to and performing music as tools for intellectual and emotional training, to strengthen self-esteem, love of beauty [aesthetic experience], discipline, and training for life [SEP, 2019].

The importance of this issue has become more evident since the latest reform of Article 3 of the Constitution, which establishes that: ‘Curricula and study programmes shall have a gender perspective and a comprehensive orientation, and shall therefore include knowledge of the sciences and humanities: the teaching of [...] the arts, **especially music**’ [emphasis added]. [Official Gazette of the Federation – DOF, 15-05-2019], which confirms the need for a solid music education and, above all, for professionals in this field of education, as part of Sustainable Development Goal 4, which includes among its targets ‘ensuring equal access for all men and women to quality technical, vocational and higher education’ [United Nations [UN], 2015].

Likewise, it is very important in any educational programme [EP] to strive for quality, currently referred to as academic excellence, and ‘aimed at the continuous improvement of educational processes that promote the maximum achievement of learning by students, for the development of their critical thinking, as well as the strengthening of ties between school and community’ [Official Gazette of the Federation [DOF], *General Education Law 30/09/2019*, Article 16, section X].

Within this pursuit of academic excellence, in this particular case, we recognise music educators as those who have the responsibility of carrying out the teaching and learning processes through music, and we call this Music Education. Likewise, it is very necessary for teachers to have sufficient musical and pedagogical knowledge and skills so that their teaching practice encourages students to develop virtues derived from musical experiences that are reflected in their actions, feelings, and thoughts.

However, music educators and researchers have detected shortcomings in the training of music educators, also known as music teachers. A music educator with gaps in their training may not fully develop the characteristics corresponding to the ideal profile for this specialist and, as a result, may affect the expected outcomes of music education, which are aimed at awakening human faculties related to will, emotions and thought, unlike learning music, an instrument or singing, with the aim of specialising in the practice of musical art and developing the appropriate techniques for optimal development in these areas.

There is a misconception that any professionally trained musician has the necessary qualities to carry out music education, which is often confused with teaching music or a musical instrument for the sake of art or education for music. Often, when hiring music teachers, someone who knows something about an instrument is sought; and it is even better if the person in question knows how to play several instruments and has belonged to a musical group [Martínez *et al.*, 2015].

The problem that stands out is that, even though professional musicians have a high level of musical training, pedagogical training is necessary. In this regard, Frongillo mentions that ‘often, highly skilled and talented local musicians are selected, but they have little experience with children and no ability to organise classes’ [2016, p. 8]. In other words, it is not enough to be an excellent musician, as pedagogical training will always be necessary to teach, and both disciplines must be worked on together.

Thus, music education should only be carried out by teachers trained as music educators.

This was stated by Violeta Hemsy de Gainza [2003] in a lecture given on 23 August 2003 at the Permanent Research Seminar of the Master's Degree in Education at the University of San Andrés, Argentina.

This responsibility, which falls on music educators, should not be viewed superficially. It is necessary to delve into the skills, knowledge and expertise that they must develop and possess, based on the principles of music education itself. It is also essential to clearly recognise the ideal profile for those who will carry out this great task, which is why special attention must be paid to the way in which training processes for future music educators are being carried out.

Among the main omissions in the literature reviewed, it is noteworthy that there is no defined profile of the music educator. There is no reference in training programmes that is directly based on the fundamental principles of music education. Only profiles based on “educational policy” issues were found, responding to the demands of educational programmes according to the needs of different countries, but they address music teaching in a superficial manner, even delegating the task to general education teachers [Mateos, 2013; Pliego, 2011].

Furthermore, no homogeneous programmes were found in the professional training of music educators, as the training programmes offered by conservatories and universities are very versatile. Some studies show that there is a majority trend towards the development of musical skills, although with little focus on the pedagogical dimensions that focus on the development of the musical-pedagogical skills of the music educator [Cisneros-Cohernour and Canto, 2010].

As this is a sensitive issue that deserves special attention, and one of the challenges of higher education, it is essential to contribute to improving the training of music educators and raising the quality of education towards academic excellence, starting with identifying the shortcomings and needs in the profile of this education professional, in order to propose solutions to this problem, through a case study of a Bachelor's degree programme in Music, with a final specialisation in Music Education.

To this end, the starting point was the search for a clear and precise definition of the profile of a music educator, so that, with this reference, the objective of identifying and addressing the needs for their training could be achieved, producing graduates with extensive knowledge of music education and with adequate musical and pedagogical skills, but, above all, sufficient for their work in the classroom, so that their professional training contributes to the harmonious development of all the qualities necessary for a truly comprehensive education in children and adolescents.

In this article, in addition to outlining the issues to be addressed, a set of texts related to music education and the training of music educators in particular were reviewed, as well as previous research, laws and other guidelines that regulate education and training processes in Mexico.

Subsequently, the methodology used is described, the analysis of the research results is presented, including some testimonies from students and graduates, and finally, the conclusions and list of references are provided.

Conceptual approaches to the training of music educators

After searching and reviewing the literature related to music, education, and music educators, among the most frequently found topics are those that discuss the relationship between music and human beings, recognising the multiple benefits that active music practice brings to integral development, seen through various perspectives, applied in different dimensions, and leaving a variety of experiences throughout human history [Fernández, 2002; Frongillo, 2016; Galicia and Zarzosa, 2018; Gómez, 2016; López and Salcedo, 2021; Pérez-Aldeguer, 2013].

It is therefore pertinent to revisit the principles set out by great music educators such as Edgar Willems [1981] and Violeta Hemsy de Gainza [1999, 2003, 2011] who, along with others such as Shinichi Suzuki and Zoltan Kodály, recognise the great importance of music education in awakening human faculties, which is why it is necessary to find teaching methods that take these principles into account.

Considering the importance of music education for the human and comprehensive development of students and the recognition, in this sense, of the contributions of learning music, as well as other arts, this document presents the following concept in relation to the arts: Artistic thinking connects mental processes with emotions and feelings, encouraging self-exploration, relationships with members of the artistic community, artistic projects, and different aesthetic perspectives on the environment. In addition, it enhances imagination and creativity through exercises that allow students to generate their own expressions, recreate artistic works based on personal sensitivity, and imagine and implement solutions to everyday problems. [SEP, 2017, p. 477]

Currently, music education in Mexico does not always manifest the expected ideals. Musicians, educators, and researchers have worked to achieve them, but the research carried out is still meagre. In general, the arts belong to a field that has been little explored in research, compared to other subject areas. However, in many cases, 'Music Education is conceived only as training to perceive the musical message, and is ignored as an important element in the comprehensive formation of personality and everything that represents the aesthetic and cultural values of man' [De Alarcón, 1992, as cited in Ortiz and Ibarretxe, 2006, p. 34].

For the theoretical basis that underpinned this research, various categories of analysis were used, including: music, music education, and the training of music educators. In this regard, some of the conceptualisations found are noteworthy: Music is good and does good when it is properly taught, transmitted, and shared, similar to physical or spiritual nourishment offered in an atmosphere of serenity and balance. Hence the importance of having an up-to-date, high-quality pedagogy that guarantees successful learning and a broad human reach. [Hemsey de Gainza, 2011, p. 15]

'In music, unique among the arts, mathematical science and emotional sensitivity come together' [Willems, 1981, p. 205].

Similarly, authors such as López and Salcedo [2021] recognise that 'it is through music that the union between equals can be promoted and restored; creating an education that is more committed to the comprehensive training of young people' [n/p, para. 24].

Another fundamental position for pedagogical training is to consider that music 'is linked to the whole person, and its benefits are immensely broad [...] it helps clear thinking, educates and deepens feeling, harmonises the whole human being, strengthens the will, helps one breathe correctly, and removes tension' [Gómez, 2016, p. 15].

Another category of analysis derived from the literature reviewed addresses the principles of music education, its benefits for human beings, and the foundations of music education according to music educators Edgar Willems and Violeta Hemsey de Gainza who, as already mentioned, are the main references for the perspective taken in this work, due to the high reputation and recognition as intellectual authorities that they have earned over the years through their work in favour of music education. Regarding this concept:

In many cases, music education is conceived only as training to perceive the musical message, and it is ignored as an important element in the comprehensive formation of personality and everything that represents the aesthetic and cultural values of humankind. [De Alarcón, 1992, as cited in Ortiz and Ibarretxe, 2006, p. 34].

No less important is the training of music educators, where the leading music pedagogues are identified as primary contributors to the construction of a profile for music educators, as it is extremely important to have a profile as a reference for detecting gaps in training, as well as for recognising the contributions that can be made.

There is currently greater awareness in the educational-musical community of the need to converge and specify theoretical perspectives in favour of a professional training curriculum for music educators. Hemsey de Gainza [2003] even mentions that there is an intellectual elite made up of music educators from different generations dedicated to pedagogical research who are pursuing master's and doctoral degrees in pursuit of professional excellence.

In an analysis conducted by Cisneros-Cohernour and Canto [2010] on teacher training curricula in music education in Mexico and Central America, they found that most programmes emphasise both education and music.

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However, the entry and exit profiles are unclear. In Mexico, the vast majority of programmes are geared towards training musicians, and some universities that offer training programmes for music educators place greater emphasis on music than on education, with the percentage of psycho-pedagogical training subjects being less than 20%.

There is generally a lack of standardised criteria in the training of music educators, so to complement the development of skills and knowledge, those in training choose between specialisations in music teaching methods. These are offered within independent institutions dedicated to the study, practice and research of a single specific method. Undoubtedly, any of these can complement an area of music educator training.

Methodology

For the methodological approach of this research, the interpretive paradigm was selected in the search for understanding of the phenomenon. This paradigm, according to Latorre, Rincón and Arnal, focuses on giving meaning to human actions by entering into people's worlds. It is the most appropriate for the methodological approach required by this research, as it 'emphasises the understanding and interpretation of educational reality from the meanings of the people involved in educational contexts' [1996, p. 38].

Based on interpretive theory from a hermeneutic approach, a qualitative methodology was developed in which theory and practice are related. Therefore, the descriptive techniques used [documentary research, content analysis, curriculum evaluation] allowed for triangulation for data analysis.

The study population was a public institution offering a degree in Music Education, and it was determined that a case study would be an appropriate means of collecting information, which, according to Stake, proposes 'a disciplined and qualitative mode of research in the singular case' [1998, p. 11].

In this particular work, the results of an analysis of the curriculum content and programme structure are presented, with the aim of observing the pedagogical, theoretical and methodological foundations that underpin the training process of music educators.

In line with the concept of curriculum as a process [Ruiz, 2016], 'it is a matter of paying greater attention to the foundations that justify the establishment of certain goals and objectives, and to the selection of certain content and its form of organisation and distribution' [p. 22]. In order to carry out the curriculum analysis, it was necessary to construct a profile of the music educator, drawing on principles of music education set out by music pedagogues such as Edgar Willems and Violeta Hemsy de Gainza, and also considering recent contributions from various authors. This profile was our main reference point for identifying more precisely the specific needs in the training of music educators and as a guide for determining some of their essential characteristics. From this theoretical perspective, the ideal profile considers the following dimensions:

- Theoretical music knowledge,
- Musical skills,
- Pedagogical music knowledge
- Personal characteristics.

To carry out the documentary analysis of the exploratory research findings, matrices were designed to filter the information and categorise it into dimensions, aimed at observing the characteristics of the Bachelor of Music programme, with a terminal output in Music Education and its relationship with the ideal profile of the music educator; as well as to observe the type of approach and objectives of the Learning Units [UDA] that make up the programme. The other phase of the research focused on conducting interviews with students and graduates of this educational programme, in order to complement the findings derived from the documentary analysis with some of their testimonies.

Results on the training needs of Music Educators

During the first phase of data collection, 394 files were collected, from which 187 documents were selected, including: the network of subjects in the Bachelor of Music programme, the Music Education terminal output of the 2007 and 2017 plans [both currently in force], as well as 95 descriptive letters for each subject and 90 learning units [UDA], respectively [it should be noted that, for the purposes of this research, the terms subjects, courses and UDA were used as synonyms, as their function within the training programme is the same].

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For the analysis of the curriculum documents, based on the dimensions of a music educator profile [mentioned above], personal characteristics were excluded because they involve data that can only be obtained from the actors themselves. It was also necessary to adjust these dimensions to the type of information that could be obtained from the selected documentary sources, resulting in:

- Theoretical music knowledge,
- Practical music skills
- Pedagogical theory
- Pedagogical practice

Similarly, two further dimensions were added in order to more accurately categorise the approach offered by their objectives and to differentiate between:

- Music education
- Music teaching

All the descriptive letters of both plans were categorised in the terminal output of Music Education and the key points were coded to determine the type of thematic approach observed from their objectives and their contribution to the profile. The topics to be developed, the type of activities and the recommended bibliography were also considered.

After selecting the approaches, they were differentiated in the systematisation using colours [the three primary colours were taken as a reference: cyan, yellow and magenta, as well as the colours resulting from their mixtures], and these categories emerged:

1. **Music Education** It combines very specific aspects of education [yellow] and holistic development through music [cyan].
2. **Support for Music Education** Between Music Education and the educational sphere, with useful contributions for music educators [lime green].
3. **Academic music** Aimed at professionalising musicians [blue].
4. **Culture: Music and Art** Basic knowledge within the educational and cultural context [orange].
5. **General education** Subjects that contribute to a general university education [magenta].

As part of the analysis, a list of all subjects/UDA [unit of didactic action] in each plan was established and, for practical purposes, each UDA name was coded taking into account the semester to which it belongs, elements of its name and other specific details.

Table 1 shows the categories of approaches with their designated colours, in order to facilitate visual appreciation of the results, which are concentrated in Figure 1.

Box 1

Table 1

Colours by approach in the Subject Network of the 2007 and 2017 Plans.

Music Education Music	Support for Music Education	Academic music	Culture: Music and Art	General training
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Source: Own elaboration.

Box 2

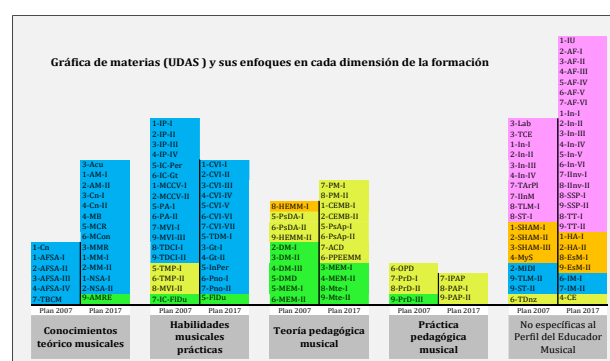


Figure 1

Subject matter [UDA] and its approaches by training dimensions

Source: Prepared internally based on the analyses carried out.

This is a bar chart showing, in addition to the approaches for each dimension, a comparison between the two plans [2007 and 2017] which, with their different heights and colours, present an almost quantitative argument about the number of subjects in each of the plans and which area of training for university students and future music educators they cover.

In order to gain a clearer picture of which subjects contribute to the training of music educators in the four dimensions described in the categories of analysis, all the subjects that are priorities in training and the approach proposed in the descriptive charter were analysed and classified. Similarly, subjects that do not contribute directly to the profile were identified, detecting their approaches.

Following this selection, and as can be seen in Figure 1, training needs were identified in relation to the academic workload, resulting from an imbalance between the dimensions of the profile, due to the fact that in both educational programme plans there are many more subjects focused on theoretical knowledge and practical musical skills [Academic Music – blue], in contrast to those focused on the theoretical and pedagogical-musical training required by music educators [Music Education – green and Music Education Support – lime green].

Although in the dimension of *Theoretical-Musical Knowledge*, the number of UDA increased in the 2017 curriculum redesign [from 6 to 14], the vast majority of subjects focus on an in-depth approach to academic music from its theoretical perspectives, and only one focused on Music Education [Musical Arrangement of the School Repertoire] was added.

In the results of the UDA dedicated to the development of *Practical Musical Skills*, it was observed that this dimension has the greatest weight in both plans; However, only one of them was designed with a focus on the profile of the Music Educator [Recorder], as the trend in this list is also towards the performance of academic music, and although there are some subjects that will provide support for the future professional [2007 plan], they do not go into depth on the profile and disappeared in the 2017 plan.

Applying the same analysis to the dimension of *Music Education Theory*, despite being the one with the largest number of subjects oriented towards the practice of Music Education, most of them have a support focus and, in the 2017 plan, there was even an increase in these UDA that do not delve into the specific profile of the music educator and a decrease in those that do focus directly on it [e.g. two in Music Didactics].

The dimension relating to *Music Teaching Practice* is the one that most lacks subjects that address this area of the profile, and it should carry considerable weight since, as Pliego [2011] points out: a university curriculum for the training of Music Educators must prioritise, for the profile of its students, their teaching practices in real teaching situations, which are well organised and supervised.

However, only one subject in the 2007 plan has the approach that opens up this possibility [Teaching Practices III], while in the most recent plan, there are none.

The other subjects that could not be categorised in any of the proposed profile dimensions were grouped together as subjects that are formative for university students in general. Furthermore, as this is training in the arts, several subjects are included that could be considered highly relevant for any future artist, although not specific to the profile of a music educator.

According to their description, in both plans, none of these UDA are designed to meet these basic needs for training music educators. even so, at least one subject per plan was found that may be useful: the *Dance Workshop* in the 2007 Plan, which proposes many recreational activities using rhythm, and the *Stage Behaviour* UDA in the 2017 Plan, which provides teachers with tools for their development in front of an audience, such as their future students.

The other subjects that in some way complement the training of music educators were placed in the category ‘Culture: music and art’ [orange], and, as can be seen in Figure 1, the vast majority of the UDA correspond to ‘General university education’ [magenta].

As a complement to the analysis of the study plans and programmes, some trends observed in relation to the interviewees' experiences are briefly described. In the area of theoretical music knowledge, they report that this area requires a change in approach, as the content covered is not particularly relevant to the practical development of teaching; in other words, it is of little use to them in their work as music educators. On this subject, one of the interviewees mentioned the experience she had with her group of classmates in a course [referring to the Analysis class], saying the following about her teacher: ‘*He made us analyse several works in great detail... sometimes we even left with a headache from all the explanations*’ [Irma, 15/01/2020].

These obstacles in training are the result of a curriculum design that recognises the Music Educator as just another musician, without taking into account the distinctions of each vocational level.

In view of this, substantial changes to the programme are suggested in order to redirect both the content of the subjects and the teaching practices towards training that is truly focused on awareness of knowledge in the field of Music Education. In this regard, there were statements that their area of training has received less attention than other final courses, as expressed by Susana [16/01/2020]: *‘they should focus the subjects according to the needs of the student, according to the degree... Music Education is one of the degrees that has been very neglected’*.

For her part, Cynthia [17/01/2020] suggests that the design of the subjects be reviewed and that teachers focus more on appropriate content, stating:

A complete analysis should be made of this descriptive letter that corresponds to each subject and, therefore, the subject should also be more “digestible” for us students, because we often say OK, we are in Counterpoint and I think we are already seeing other things as well, teachers tend to ramble a lot, don't they?

In this regard, there are similarities with the findings of a study conducted in Spain, which states that: “in their initial training, they do not receive sufficient tools to address and adopt appropriate strategies in a diverse classroom. This shortcoming should be overcome and teachers should be provided with quality training” [Blanco and Serrano, 2025, p. 145].

The concerns and opinions of the student community interviewed are diverse, as they also propose a change in dynamics, suggesting that teachers could make theoretical classes a little more practical in order to facilitate students' understanding. In this regard, Susana [16/01/2020] mentioned that:

It would be wonderful if, for example, history classes focused more on music, and instead of just giving theory, they presented the music... they played music so that we could understand, not just theory, but something much more practical.

In terms of instrument performance, the content, technical development and repertoire provided to music educators is similar to that given to students in other terminal courses, where the aim is to produce high-level instrumentalists.

This type of approach does not entirely converge with the practice of music education, bearing in mind that it is largely developed in primary school classrooms. In view of this, Irma [15/01/2020] complained:

When I told them, “I feel that what you are giving me is for the others who are learning piano,” but you never give me anything about music for children, such as what the teachers ask me for, for example, “I want a song for Mummy,” well, where do I get that from? They never taught me anything here related to the dates marked on the SEG calendar, and there are quite a few!

The voices expressed, on multiple occasions, that it is necessary to put knowledge into practice and, furthermore, that it is essential to know the real world when teaching. A variety of anecdotes emerged on this topic; however, for the purposes of categorisation, the most similar experiences and those that were most relevant to the objective of this study were synthesised. In context, the interviewees agreed that they had addressed pedagogical content, but only from a theoretical perspective. As an example, Violeta [28/01/2020] stated: *‘All pedagogy, theoretically speaking, may be what you are teaching, but in practice it is something completely different’*. This is in line with Cynthia [17/01/2020], who said that *‘there was a lack of practice, of connection with the real world’*.

It is worth noting an important fact that has not been mentioned until now: during each interview, without exception, each participant had a noticeable change in reaction when addressing this issue, ranging from complaint to irony, expressing open dissatisfaction with their experience during their pedagogical training.

As another reference, Susana [16/01/2020] stated that *‘there has been a lack of practice, much more practice... we have had a lot of theory, and theory sometimes goes in one ear and out the other, but you don't forget practice’*.

To summarise all of the above, it is necessary to strengthen the programme's in-depth approach to music pedagogy, both from a theoretical and practical perspective. In addition, the lack of teaching practice has generated various controversies and dissatisfaction among students, who expressed the need to carry out their teaching practice with real students.

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Faced with this situation, Susana [16/01/2020] said, 'We didn't have, for example, a subject called "teaching observation" [referring to the 2007 curriculum subject "Observation of teaching practice" code 6-OPD], we never went to any institution, never.'

Finally, the results of the analysis show that, in both plans, there is a need for a greater number of subjects in each of the dimensions of the music educator profile in the curriculum analysed, as well as an adjustment in the focus of these subjects, allowing for a balance between those oriented towards music education and support subjects, and those which, are currently mainly oriented towards Academic Music and even subjects that are not specific to the profile of the music educator, whose approaches are formative in general topics.

Therefore, it is essential that greater attention be given to music teaching practice, as the best learning is obtained through practice and experience, and the real scenario is what determines the consolidation of knowledge. With regard to music pedagogy, both plans show a disproportion between theory and practice, and it would be necessary to make adjustments to the programme in order to find a balance, both in terms of the number of UDA [academic units] and in terms of its approaches, in order to form a profile more in line with the principles of music pedagogy, given that there is an excess of subjects that meet the needs of university students or professional musicians, but not those of music educators.

It is well known that, ideally, all subjects should be based on the pedagogical foundations of music education. However, although it is recognised that other areas of knowledge must be considered in university education, when discussing a terminal degree in music education, the focus should be on those categories most directly linked to the ideal profile of a music educator.

Conclusions

In this research, dedicated to the analysis of the educational programme of the 'Bachelor of Music' degree, with a terminal degree in Music Education, one of the main findings is the imbalance that exists between the approaches of the different dimensions of the music educator's profile in relation to the categories analysed.

In short, there is a need for the subjects in the *Theoretical Music Knowledge* dimension to readjust their focus to that required by the terminal exit, since, as they stand now, they are oriented towards academic music, which is not exactly the most appropriate for music educators, taking into account that, in a real-life music education setting, a teacher will have few opportunities to address purely musical topics with their primary school pupils or to design musical activities at school.

Although the dimension of *Practical Musical Skills* carries the most weight in both plans, it is a conceptual error, with a pedagogical shortcoming, to assume that knowing how to perform academic music on various musical instruments leads to taking advantage of the possibilities of instrumental practice in the human and integral development of performers in primary education; What future music educators need is to understand how instruments can be used as pedagogical tools to awaken each person's abilities and employ them for the benefit of individuals' comprehensive development in the social context in which they will carry out their work.

The dimension of *pedagogical-musical theory* also highlights the need for a change in the approach to the subjects that comprise it, for which it will be necessary to take into account other perspectives in addition to those observed in the UDA bibliographies, integrating other authors who focus on a pedagogy that takes music as its main means for the formation of individuals.

In the dimension of *Musical Pedagogical Practice*, although there are countless types of practice that music educators should carry out, depending on the nature of the social and cultural groups in which they will work, it is essential to increase the number of subjects that focus directly on Music Education, rather than on its support, and, above all, to ensure that, from the beginning of their training, they make significant progress in this area, dedicating quality time to it.

Finally, the UDA [Unidades de Desarrollo Académico, or Academic Development Units] for 'General University Education' should be reduced in order to achieve a better balance with the rest.

In the category ‘Culture: Music and Art,’ although they are not specifically focused on knowledge and/or skills specific to the profile of the music educator in any of its dimensions, they do represent elementary and indispensable knowledge for every individual, artist, and musician, expanding the cultural heritage of the music teacher.

We can conclude that a new curriculum modification is required that seeks stability and better weighting of learning units in all dimensions of an ideal profile for music educators and, fundamentally, that places special emphasis on an approach oriented towards Music Education, which contributes to achieving the perspective advocated by Sustainable Development Goal 4, of quality education, also at the higher university level, as a path to academic excellence.

Declarations

Conflict of interest

The author declares that she has no conflict of interest. She has no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the article reported in this article.

Availability of data and materials

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Abbreviations

CPEUM Political Constitution of the United Mexican States
DOF Official Gazette of the Federation
SDGs Sustainable Development Goals
UN United Nations
SEP Ministry of Public Education

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Background

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