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## RESEARCH TOPIC: PROMOTING CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY IN CROSS-BORDER MUSIC PRACTICE PROGRAMS IN VOCATIONAL COLLEGES

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### Abstract

This research is a systemic review of literature on the music practices in cross-border vocational colleges and they are open for cultural diversity and inclusivity. It covers the integration of cultural authentic education, effects of technology and digitization, personalized learning, and educational strategies that promote equity, inclusion, and student motivation. The study reveals how important is to place music education in the context of a multicultural student body, use digital media that allows for greater access and engagement, and design education to correspond with the professional profiles of each student. It also gives the attention to equity and inclusion as a way of building supportive learning environments and the role of pedagogical innovation and teacher training as means of enhancing quality and effectiveness of music education. These results emphasize the necessity of integrated strategies to eliminate Eurocentric biases, language barriers and power balance in the way to inclusivity. Suggestions have been made to integrate intercultural competence training, incorporating diversity in curricula, addressing language barriers, promoting equality and inclusion, creating collaborative environments, and providing supportive institution settings. The significance of transnational music programs in vocational colleges is highlighted on the ground that they empower students with the competencies, know-how and attitudes required for the success in the newly emerging, culturally diverse community.

*Keywords:* Cultural Diversity in Music Education, Cross-Border Vocational Training, Inclusivity and Equity in Music Programs, Digital Media in Music Learning, Intercultural Competence in Music Education

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, the international context of music education has experienced revolutionary changes, and international cooperation is one of the most important developments. According to Crawford (2017), these developments are caused by the cognate from the vocational colleges in which the exchange and partnerships are the means of such cooperation. Through the partnership students get the chance to explore different music cultures, broaden their cultural horizons and learn the intercultural competencies that would come in handy when they join the new global space. On one side, these programs have their benefits which are also accompanied by the cultural diversity and inclusiveness problems while implementing these programs. In addition, Cevik et al. (2013), specified that vocational level cross-cultural music curriculum design program aims to reach the goal where students are allowed to learn opera styles, methods and cultures. The students who learn diverse musical styles get in touch with the global music and develop their musical minds as well. Moreover, students get a chance to meet new friends from different countries, cultures and believe, hence the values such as tolerance, mutual understanding, and cross-cultural communication get boosted. Additionally, Dai and Xiang (2017), stated that the impact of cross-border music on diversity and inclusivity cannot be overstated; however, several ways that show the limitation of this practice should be kept in mind. A second barrier is the bias for some genres of music, which denies some forms of music like Western classical music and other genres. This Eurocentric bias also perpetuates culturally superior status, but also makes non-Western musical traditions less visible, which in turn leads to less cultural exchange.

Apart from this, language and communication issues could create cross-border music practice programs problems, especially in classrooms where students speak different languages. In this context, Miksza, Evans and McPherson (2021), emphasized that music is usually perceived as a global language, but the nuances of musical expression are sometimes difficult to transpose from one culture to another. Thus, activities for promoting inclusive orientation should also focus on more comprehensive communication according the Multilanguage aspect and real engagement. Moreover, Kardos (2012) analyzed that it is of paramount importance to recognize, and correct, the power imbalances that occur within the cross-border music programs where an economic inequality exists between institutions from more developed countries and others from less advantaged regions. This power play may come in multiple ways of inequality in resources, disproportionate institutional support, and also, differentiation of students based on their socioeconomic status. Furthermore, Lee et al. (2011), assessed that to create real inclusive spaces, the priority is to provide environments where all members can share perspectives and display their skills, irrespective of their social

and economic conditions. Such problems have highlighted the need to have an approach that is more multidimensional and comprehensive for music practice programs that span borders. The diversity assures many activities including diversifying the repertoire to cover a wider spectrum of musical traditions, supporting students from different backgrounds and creation of approaches that foster the interconnecting of different cultures. In addition to this, it demands a pledge to creating spaces that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion at every phase of program planning and implementation.

The aspect of proliferating cultural diversity and inclusivity is a must in the context of cross-border music practice program hence it is necessary to elaborate on the capacity of those initiatives to turn students into better people and professionals. They gain tolerance, respect, and a deep insight of diversity when students are exposed to multiple types of music. Collaborative music exchanges allow the students to organize intricate social settings, to seek the true meaning of life beyond cultural differences and to become the workforce (Marsh, 2012). Besides, the cross-border music programs that the students participate in provide them with the unique opportunities to gain training beyond the university classroom boundaries. They can explore the various of styles of music through either their unforgettable study abroad programs, or online partnerships with counterparts from other countries or their participation in the global music festivals and conferences. These activities do not only enhance their musical senses but also expand their outer perceptions (Shaw, 2015). Therefore, they act as ordinary people of the world as well as the culturally conscious. This awareness goes beyond music. In addition, the cross-border music practice program through the promotion of inter-culturalism and inclusivity in TVET promotes social inclusivity and thus equitable societies. Through the promotion of cultural understanding and appreciation these programs enable the breakdown of prejudice and discrimination creating a pathway for increased social cohesion and harmony (Green, 2017). These initiatives also make music education available to students underrepresented groups in the art field allowing democratization in all levels of the art society and increasing the power of these communities.

Objective 1: To assess current practices in cross-border music programs to understand how cultural diversity and inclusivity are integrated.

Objective 2: Evaluate pedagogical strategies used in cross-border music programs for their effectiveness in promoting cultural diversity and inclusivity.

Objective 3: Identify institutional support systems necessary for fostering cultural diversity and inclusivity within vocational college music departments.

Objective 4: Construct a comprehensive model through a systematic review of literature to synthesize cross-border music practice programs in vocational colleges.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Transnational music projects in vocational colleges allow for students to interact with the diverse musical backgrounds and acquire valuable intercultural skills. The current pedagogical strategies and institutional support systems in cross-border music programs with respect to the cultural equity and inclusivity are critically analyzed in this literature review.

## 2.1 Assessing Cultural Diversity Integration in Cross-Border Music Programs

The curriculum and repertoire design hold the core value of the cross-border music learning context as far as the cultural diversity and inclusion are concerned. According to McCarty and Lee (2014), vocational college programs are designed to provide courses focusing on an overview of musical traditions from around the world. It is a complex approach in which a plethora of genres are covered, such as Western classical music, jazz, traditional folk music, and other genres of world music, etc. The cultural diversity of musical genres provides an environment where students are exposed to many musical styles bringing cultural exchange and the development of a respect for the plurality of global music heritage. Moreover, Sun and Lasauskiene (2019), emphasized that vocational schools prefer interdisciplinary techniques to historicize the relationship between musical practices and society as a whole. Such as connecting historical, political and social factors leading to different music traditions. With the competence of identifying and touching the multi-layered environment the students gain deep understanding and appreciation of the music. The interdisciplinary approach not only improves students' and their academic success but also broadens their cultural understanding and literacy. Besides, vocational colleges can include in their curriculum specialized cultural practices courses or workshops. According to Reimer (2022), hence some of these areas could include introduction to indigenous music, African drumming or Asian classical music through the courses that are offered to students. These special music courses evoke student interest by highlighting native musical traits, highlights typical rhythms, melodies as well as showcases the cultural values of the music. As a result, students can develop some mechanism to support themselves to know the diversification of musical styles as they engage in such programs that enable them to experience widely different musical cultures. The inclusiveness initiatives of the vocational colleges were established to provide diverse cultural learning environments that accept, celebrate, and respect cultural diversity. Intercultural interaction and exchange are essential elements in cross-border music programs in vocational colleges and they impact the learning process, build an understanding for diverse cultural features. Through strategic partnerships with international organizations, colleges of vocational education and training organize exchanges, joint concerts and collaborative projects that help their students gain the ability to know different ways. Thus, one of the most important functions of such projects is to evoke an epiphany for an artist as to the trial and tribulations encountered by others as well as to teach him/her self-tolerance and develop a sense of communality (Almeida et al., 2016). Aside from that, the vocational schools offer opportunities for the students to be learning enriched through inviting guest speakers, scholars and practitioners from different cultural backgrounds. Invited speakers, master classes, or workshops where visiting experts are doing the job provides an exciting experience for various worlds of musical cultures. Through the experience of visitors, students gain unsuspected knowledge about different musical approaches which they apply and cherish in order to produce cultural diversity and development. Vocational schools may have highly engaged learners via the in-built classes culture that has collaboration and exchange among students and lecturers and in that way there is creation of respect, curiosity, and understanding among the students and faculty members (Chen, 2020). The joint activities will help students to have the right skills and experiences necessary for efficient life and workforce in the diverse and interconnected world. As a result, such concerts also enrich students' musical experience by exposing them to many genres, techniques and musical traditions. As a consequence of the students' active role in

the lessons on the music of other countries, their understanding of the musical culture of the whole world expands so that overall improvement of musical education and their artistic perception is realized. The main task of intercultural collaboration and exchanges is to foster cultural understanding among institutes of music (Herrera & Martens, 2018). Engagement in the cross-cultural dialogue and conversations parallels an aim towards the development of culturally sensitive and socially conscious musicians who are skilled to successfully navigate life's global intricacies with empathy, sensitivity, and respect.

## **2.2 Evaluating Pedagogical Strategies in Music Programs for Diversity and Inclusivity**

Music-exchange programs between countries, as an educational practice, seek to promote intercultural sharing, appreciating and respecting of each other's way of life. According to Shuler (2011), such a cooperation among different institutions from various countries presents an opportunity to the students for exploration and discovery of myriad traditions and performance styles of music.

Immersion in the varied musical traditions is one of the core tactics of cross-border music programs. In addition, Joseph and Southcott (2010), assessed that by exposing students to a wider range of musical genres, instruments and performances from different parts of the world, these programs challenge the Eurocentric bias always associated with music education. Moreover, these exchanges not only extend the musicality of students but as they come to develop the cultures that are reflected in the traditions. Hence, such an approach is critical in fostering global citizenship among learners, radiating their attitude towards diversity. Collaborating is a crucial part of cross-border music programs. Moreover, McKoy & Lind, (2022), clarified that these programs usually involve cooperative tasks in which the students from different countries compose music by blending elements from their cultures. This participative method will be the most productive in the elimination of cultural barriers and strengthening of interracial tolerance. Through interaction with peers from diverse walks of life, students get to manage cultural diversity, master interpersonal skills in addition to amplifying their own innovative traits. The result of these projects in public displays also becomes a stage for the exhibition of diversity in cultural contexts that adds to the quest to embrace inclusivity. Technology is one of the key factors that contribute to achieve positive outcome in the international music programs (Waddell & Williamon 2019). The digital platforms and instruments bring about virtual interactions and cooperation which enables the students to do exchanges and collaboration (to study together in a group and with the teacher) even without the involvement of physical mobility as asserted by Haleem et al., (2022). This level of accessibility, however, is more of a tool for being able to develop inclusivity because it provides students deprived of international travel with the opportunities. It has been reported by Yende (2013) that online workshops, masterclasses, and platforms for cooperative work are applied to overcome the distances, guaranteeing the consistent interaction of ideas, musical techniques and cultural knowledge.

One more main pedagogical strategy is cultural exchange. Many of the cross-border music programs include exchange programs, where students could be personally immersed in the music and culture of a host country. Sobkowiak (2019) reported that immersion in such experiences will improve students' knowledge and sensitivity to cultural differences. College students who live and study in a different culture will be able to use music as not only a form of work or study but as a way of life that

enriches their educational and personal development (Váradi 2022). Furthermore, promoting critical reflection and discourse is an integral part of these programs. Students are often asked to think about their experiences, talk about the challenges and benefits of working with different cultures, as well as, the social, political, and historical contexts of the music they study and play. This kind of critical thinking is highly significant and helps to develop a more profound understanding of music in the society. People come to think of the question of cultural appropriation, who is in power in the world's music traditions, and how the traditions of different cultures have to be approached with proper respect. According to Lau (2022), the success in implementing cross-border music programs also relies on the preparedness of teachers to create culturally diverse and inclusive learning environments. To provide professional development opportunities focusing on intercultural competence, inclusive pedagogy, and the detailed aspects of teaching various musical traditions are necessary as reported by Kang (2022). Furthermore, it has also been reported by Seo (2022) that teachers need to be proficient in cultural sensitivity matters and learn to create an atmosphere where all the students interact without any discrimination or being marginalized. This entails a lot of training and a constant effort on the side of teachers towards their personal development and reflections on the part of the educators themselves.

Through international music programs in skill development institutions, cultural diversity and inclusivity are highly encouraged (Cain et al., 2013). The combined effect of these programs is therefore a holistic approach to students' music education, which prepares them for life in the globalized world where collaborative learning, diversity of musical traditions, use of technology and cultural exchanges are needed. Alongside providing skills and knowledge, it has been evaluated by Coleman et al., (2021) that such activities also develop the cultural competence and empathy of the students to better promote diversity in the community. Therefore, music education programs like this serve as an evidence of the strength of music as a language of the universe that can bring together all the nations and peoples in the world while appreciating their differences.

### **2.3 Institutional Support Systems for Cultural Diversity in Vocational College Music Departments**

In a multicultural environment, it is crucial nowadays to promote cultural diversity and inclusivity within vocational college music departments. The language of music has a unique capability of bringing peoples across different cultural backgrounds together (Izen et al., 2023). It can also help develop harmony among communities with diverse cultures. In addition, being highly inclusive goes beyond the mere rhetoric, but it is a necessity. It requires serious endeavors and institutional support systems to get to the target. Constructing a cultural diversity line of music departments relies on a culturally diverse curriculum. Institutions may include courses covering the whole swath of music styles from around the world. As a comprehensive approach, beyond the limits of the Western classical music, it includes the genres of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and indigenous cultures. Nethsinghe (2012) evaluated that through the medium of this ethnically mixed and varied musical styles, instruments, and performing techniques, students are introduced to appreciation of cultural and music diversity, as well as the concept of universality. In this context, it has been reported by Margas (2023) that the development of an inclusive educational environment mainly depends on the existence of a diverse academic setting. Institutions need to recruit teachers coming from

different backgrounds in order to reflect the diversity of the student body. In addition to recruitment, Sukmayadi & Gunara (2019) reported that it is important to offer faculty members ongoing training on cultural competency. Teacher's proficiency in dealing with a diverse group of learners can be enhanced only if they are equipped with the needed knowledge and competence while being capable to respond to cultural issues. This not only enhances the educational experience but also promotes inclusivity within the classroom setting.

Besides that, mentorship programs' primary importance is not only in helping students excel academically but also in supporting students at the beginning of their academic life (Bond et al., 2023). Developing a mentorship program, where students are paired up with faculty advisors of the same culture, helps to foster a sense of belonging and gives the right advice. Besides the academic activities, Murrell & Onosu (2023) evaluated that the mentoring relationships extend in other areas such as cultural integration and the overcoming of culture background issues. Along with culture-based curricula and faculty, they represent the quintessence of making music departments encourage newcomers. The campuses of colleges and universities represent the place, where the students' competence and awareness of cultural diversity can reach a new level, due to the opportunity to enjoy the diversity of musical styles and recruitment of faculty from different parts of the world. Peer-to-peer learning is very active and efficient as well (Williamson & Paulsen-Becejac 2018). In addition to this, Saranya et al., (2022) reported that mentorship programs make it clear that students should get support and encouragement they need to achieve their academic and personal goals. Through these collaborations, the environment fosters learning with diversity where cultural pluralism is appreciated and respected. It is therefore crucial for educational organizations to shape the space where diversity of the personal elements of international experiences is thriving. Notably, Kelley-Hall (2010) evaluated that the student support services can act as the foundation through which the diversity of cultures that make the student body can be demonstrated and celebrated. Implementation of diversified support services and equal performance platforms is not simply fulfilling the numbers or box-ticking policy; it is about the students' well-being and readiness for the world that is frequently interconnected.

Student Support Services serves as the foundation of any college's efforts towards promoting diversity and inclusivity (Kelley-Hall 2010). Through academic counseling, tutoring and diversity sensitive services institutions can assist their students to develop personally and excel academically. Such services should be created with a thorough knowledge of the cultural aspects that in a way define the experience of students. Likewise, Collins et al., (2010) evaluated that counseling services should be competent in dealing with topics such as cultural displacement, identity issues, and the difficulties of a new cultural setting. Similarly, academic advisement and tutoring should take the educational gap between the parts of the world which have different education standards into account (McIntosh et al., 2021). Similarly, the creation of cultural student unions plays a great role in promoting intercultural communication among the students (Abid 2023). These associations are not only cultural exchanges they are safe havens as well for people far away from their personal backgrounds who can find common ground and interact with helpful peers and others. These zones play a vital role in keeping students' minds and emotions healthy, and provision of the support they need to help them deal with uncertainties.

Music departments are those in which instrumental music is one of the factors used in cultural celebration. More specifically, having various kinds of musical styles and traditions in the performance

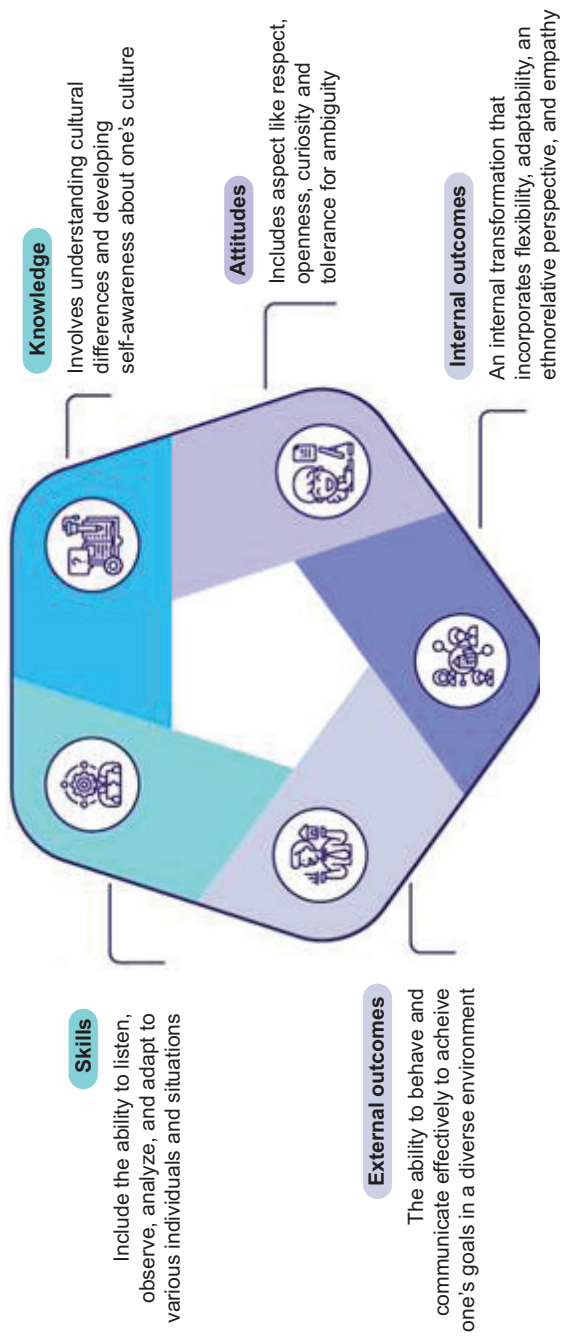
is the effective way to celebrate cultural diversity (Barton & Barton 2018). Performances should not be restricted to western culture and include music from other cultures around the globe. The students acquire indispensable knowledge during this method that enables them to appreciate the world's musical diversity. Additionally, this strategy provides for the acceptance and recognition of students from various ethnic backgrounds. These limited performance opportunities give students a chance to explore their own culture, and they also introduce them to the multiple options of musical diversity all over the world (Cain et al., 2013). Organizations have to recruit students with different cultural background and put in place systems that ensure the same students do well in academics. These activities could be based on the partnership with community organizations, the high schools, and cultural institutions, especially for the purpose of finding and recruiting individuals with outstanding skills, but they are from underrepresented social groups. Furthermore, Chan et al., (2008) also reported that scholarships, grants, and financial aid programs can also help remove barriers to access and ensure that all students have the opportunity to pursue their passion regardless of their socio-economic background.

## 2.4 Theoretical Framework

### 2.4.1. *Intercultural Competence Theory*

Intercultural Competence Theory (Gerrish & AzitaEmami 2006) plays a central role in understanding and promoting cultural diversity and inclusiveness in music practice programs that cross borders. It reinforces the need for the skills of reaching agreement, interacting, and conducting trade in a culture preserving manner. It underlines importance of understanding, knowledge, compassion as well as skills in dealing with cultural environments that are often complex. This theory provides a theoretical foundation for the course design, teaching practices, and institutional aid to strengthen a community of students who are globally competent and culturally sensitive. In such programs, Intercultural Competence Theory is built around some key concepts. Firstly, it is the incorporation of a variety of worldwide musical traditions and practices that are presented in a holistic and inclusive curriculum. This, in turn, leads to the fact that students have a variety of musical genres that they listen to and that they get the contextual understanding of traditions origination. Crooke et al., (2023) reported that by understanding the historical, social, and political issues that shape different musical genres, the students will have both awareness and respect for cultural diversity. Furthermore, pedagogical strategies based on this theory encourage active learning and reflection on cultural identity and biases. The components of intercultural competence are shown in Fig. 1. Strategies such as collective tasks, cross-cultural exchange, and descriptive writing tasks allow students to discover their own cultural assumptions and learn from other cultural practices (Dudley 2022). These methods emphasize the development of students' cross-cultural communication competence and on creating music with elements from different cultures. Institutional support is equally important for carrying out Intercultural Competence Theory in music departments. This can be achieved through faculty training on intercultural teaching techniques and initiation of mentoring schemes that pair students from diverse cultures. Those programs can be used to build an embracing and inviting academic environment where all students are not only comfortable but also motivated to share their culture. Intercultural Competence theory gives a comprehensive set of instruments for a college of a vocational establishment resolved to promote and strengthen





**Fig. 1** Components of Intercultural Competence.  
Source: (AIHR, 2023).

cultural diversity and inclusiveness in the delivery of its international music practice program. Such programs aim at cultivating students' intercultural competence so that upon graduation they will be in a position to deal with the global music community in a respectful, informed, collaborative manner.

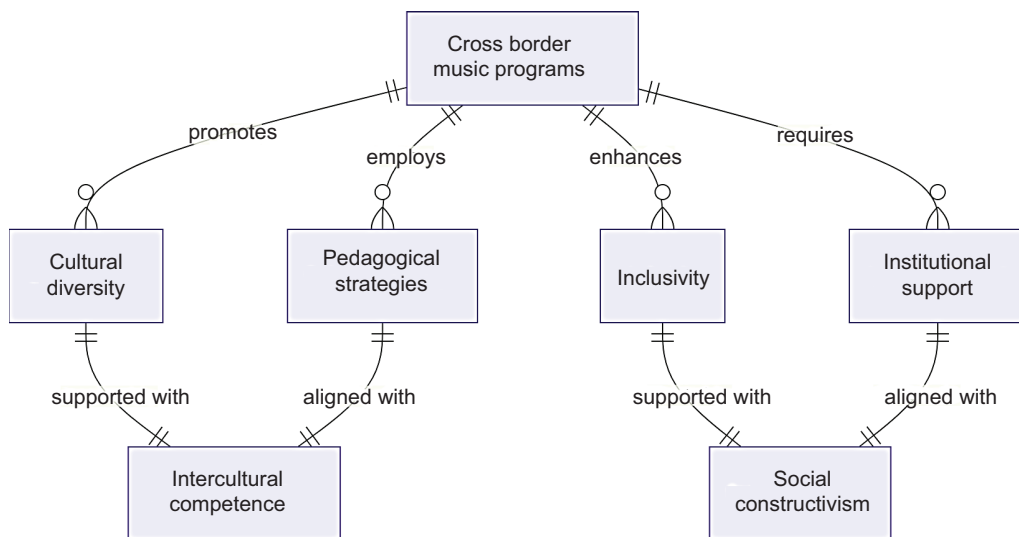
#### *2.4.2. Social Constructivism Theory*

The Social Constructivism Theory (Fosnot & Perry 1996) is based on a complementary approach to explaining the ways in which cultural diversity and inclusion can be integrated into the cross-border music performance programs. The theory stipulates that knowledge is made on the basis of social interactions and common experiences, as such, culture plays a pivotal role in the development of our world understanding. Music education is where the social constructivism theory states the interactivity of students which can learn about various music cultures in a learning environment that is linked. The application of Social Constructivism in cross-border music projects will require hands-on activities where the students partner up and work on joint music projects that incorporate aspects of their different musical and cultural backgrounds (Keast 2009). By this joint effort, students are provided with an opportunity of teamwork that results in creation of the new musical expressions which are an amalgamation of cultural constraints, leading to the understanding of cultural richness. These projects not only contribute to the students' musical growth but also serve as a bridge of intercultural communication and comprehension.

Social Constructivism Theory stipulates contextual learning in music education. Therefore, students should not only be able to recognize distinct musical styles and traditions from other cultures but also should know the social, cultural and historical context of these traditions. According to Jepson & Clarke (2014), visits, cultural festivals and getting familiar with guest artists from different cultural backgrounds are very useful sources that provide students deep experiences which increase their understanding and adoration to the world, music. Institutional implementation of Social Constructivism provides the opportunity to enter into partnerships with music institutions, cultural organizations across the globe and artists at home and overseas (Akpan et al., 2020). These collaborations can be authentic sources of learning that help students get closer to the musical traditions and beliefs. Furthermore, leveraging technology to facilitate virtual exchanges and collaborations can extend the reach of these programs, allowing students to connect with peers and mentors globally.

## **2.5 Conceptual Framework**

Considering the study variables, the Fig. 2 depicts the conceptual framework of this research; The conceptual framework for promoting cultural diversity and inclusivity in cross-border music practice programs highlights the interplay between key components: Cross-Border Music Programs, Cultural Diversity, Inclusion, Pedagogical Strategies, Institutional Support, Intercultural Competence, and Social Constructivism. Cross-Border Music Programs offer a space for Cultural Diversity and Inclusivity, teach Pedagogical Strategies, require Institutional Support to prosper. Cultural Diversity and Inclusiveness are the basic principles tailored by Intercultural Social Constructivism, respectively, to illuminate the relevance of knowledge sharing across cultural borders. Intercultural Competence and Social Constructivist Pedagogical Strategies and Institutional Support are adopted to deliver culture-competent and constructivist-oriented music education.



**Fig. 2** Conceptual Framework.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research methods which are applied to the analysis on the subject “Promoting Cultural Diversity and Inclusivity in Cross-Border Music Practice Programs in Vocational Colleges” by taking the search techniques, databases, Prisma Framework, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and ethics into consideration.

#### 3.1 Research Method: Qualitative

A qualitative method is used to examine the subtle experiences, attitudes, and approaches of cultural diversity and inclusiveness within cross-border music cultures practiced in vocational colleges. Secondary qualitative research is useful because they present a general picture of the information available, hence giving new understanding without primary data collection (Cheong et al., 2023). The secondary qualitative research is valid because it is able to report evidence of varied nature from different sources and that is how the details and insight of the issue of varied concerns are discovered. The data collection is rather cost-effective and efficient as the most of them are accessible that possibly shortens the time and saves the cost needed in the process of collecting data. It supports the research projects designed to follow an approach of longitudinal design and unveils trends in cognitive processes and behavior patterns. Furthermore, the primary qualitative research can also contribute to the development of theory by integrating the findings from various studies which results into a broader and multi-faceted theoretical framework which captures the complexity of human experiences and social realities.

### 3.2 Search Strategies

Searching strategies are imperative in research as they facilitate the exhaustive and the systematic exploring of the literature. It leads to the reinforcement of research findings, the formation of hypotheses that are relevant to the situation, and the application of the analyses within the broader spectrum of existing knowledge. This enhances the usefulness and the credibility of the research outcomes. Efficiency of logical operators and completeness of searching space in databases together make research studies more reliable (Vom Brocke et al., 2015). PRISMA framework provide trust-able and reliable information. The elements of Boolean and database search algorithms are defined below;

### 3.3 Boolean Operators

Search terms employ Boolean operators to clarify or add more information that is retrieved. As Krüger et al. (2015) stated that the common and primary Boolean operators are AND (which narrow results by combining phrases), OR (which broadens results by including either of the words), and NOT (which removes particular words). The other way around, AND limits the phrases, while OR includes both. The following are the Boolean operators used in this study;

### 3.4 Databases

The systematic review process is database targeted that enables the acquisition, arrangement, sorting, and management of the data in a systematic manner (Sriganesh et al., 2016). Research and evidence is stored in databases to be retrieved when a systematic review is required. Researchers make use of these databases for prompt identification as well as collection of the desired information. Researchers must know how to synthesize those databases properly so that the whole systematic review process is based on the level of how comprehensive and accessible these databases are. As a result, the inclusion of databases in evidence synthesis plays an essential role as they allow

**Table 1** Search Terms.

Search Term	Boolean Operation(s)	Combined Search Query
Cultural Diversity	AND	“Cultural Diversity” AND “Music Education”
Cross-Border Music Programs	AND	“Cross-Border Music Programs” AND “Vocational Colleges”
Intercultural Competence	OR	“Intercultural Competence” OR “Cultural Competence”
Pedagogical Strategies	AND	“Pedagogical Strategies” AND “Inclusivity”
Music Curriculum Design	NOT	“Music Curriculum Design” NOT “Western Classical”
Institutional Support	AND	“Institutional Support” AND “Cultural Diversity”
Global Music Traditions	OR	“Global Music Traditions” OR “World Music”
Intercultural Exchange	AND	“Intercultural Exchange” AND “Music Programs”

**Table 2** List of Databases.

Databases
IEEE Xplore
Google Scholar
ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center)
Science Direct
Springer Link
ProQuest

researchers to conduct a systematic and integrated review analysis (Kong et al., 2020). A database is a collection of structured data that is configured optimally to provide accessibility and administration. Academic databases collect scholarly works including journals and other academic sources. A subsection of data utilized in the investigation is presented in the table below;

### 3.5 Data Collection

Data collection processes involve the evaluation of five (5) relevant literature that have been accessed from reliable databases. The systemic review affirms that selected articles are closely linked to the topic “Promoting Cultural Diversity and Inclusivity in Cross-Border Music Practice Programs in Vocational Colleges.”

### 3.6 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The criteria for inclusion and exclusion are of vital importance for the research since the criteria for the study selection are set by them. These standards, which involve using only the right data, provide the study with a better internal validity. This increases the authenticity of the findings. Adding a clear list of their research limits enables them to keep their readers focused as well as observant. The inclusion and exclusion criteria for this research are presented in the table below;

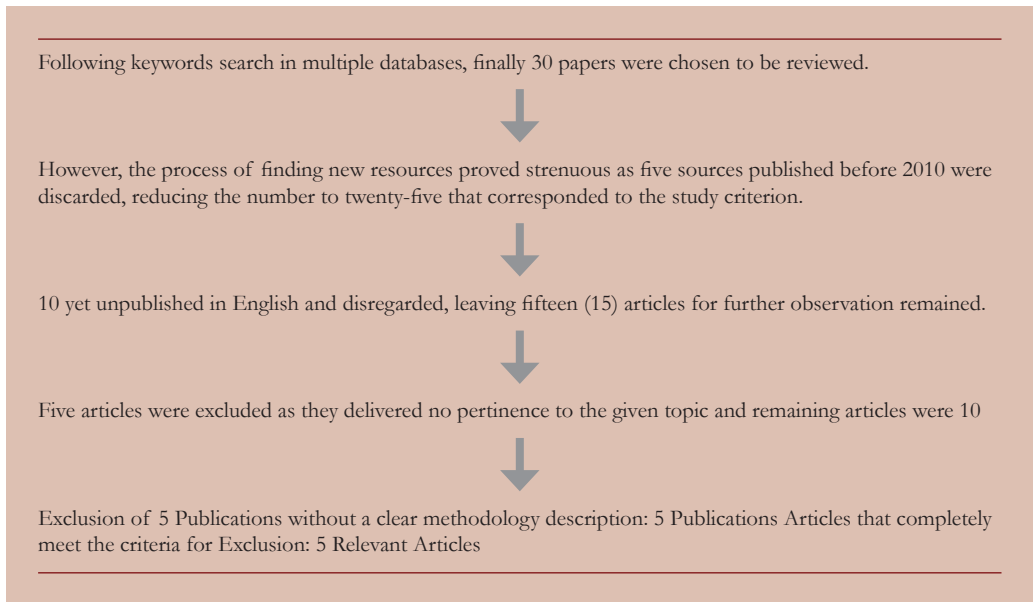
### 3.7 PRISMA Framework

PRISMA (“Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses”) is a major research framework. This idea is important because it establishes a framework for the systematic review and meta-analysis research. PRISMA is an empirical framework that improves study reliability, reporting quality and replication of scientific publication (Page et al., 2021). Through its methodological approach, researchers are able to present generalization and judgment of the research findings. This allows for improved evidence synthesis and for researchers to do it as appropriate. Working on the quality and competence of systematic reviews contributes the validity and accuracy of the reviewed information and that is brought by PRISMA. The PRISMA model offers not only the researchers but also publishers a wide range of advantages and more than the readers because it does not only provide clarity but also the consistency of a study (Tricco et al., 2018). In

**Table 3** Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria.

Criteria	Exclusion	Inclusion
Methodology Description	Lacks a clear description of research methodology	Provides a clear explanation of research methodology
Publication Date	Before 2010	2010 or later
Relevance to Topic	Irrelevant to the research topic	Directly relevant to the research topic
Language	Non-English	English
Academic Integrity	Engages in plagiarism, lacks proper citations, or breaches academic integrity	Follows academic integrity norms and proper citation guidelines

**Table 4** PRISMA Framework.



this research, the systematic review approach was based on the PRISMA protocol, which enabled transparency and methodological control. The thorough process is when the pertinent articles are found and scanned for study eligibility and this increases the reliability and reproducibility of research findings. The PRISMA model for the research is as follows;

### 3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards compliance brings about trust, orderliness and responsible behavior in research. The autonomy, confidentiality and informed consent of researchers and participants are fundamental

ethical principles that support this relationship. Ethical research procedures build up upon credible and trustworthy results of the studies, which in turn increase the quality and the reliability of the final scientific conclusions. Besides case studies, ethical practices develop such culture in the research domain that end in public trust to science and preserve the integrity of academics (National Research Council 2002). By the final part, ethics considerations provide the basis for the development of societal implications and values of research and development. The ethical issues had been addressed in this study and there was no need of involving persons or administering questionnaires in conducting a comprehensive literature review. The investigation reveals that there is a great necessity for proper sources provision and thorough citations because, unfortunately, there is no academic integrity.

## 4. RESULTS

In this chapter, the results of systematic literature review are outlined with the main findings and a model that will be taken from the relevant publications on “Promoting Cultural Diversity and Inclusivity in Cross-Border Music Practice Programs in Vocational Colleges” are applied. The model is shown as Figure 3.

### 4.1 Cultural Inclusivity and Responsiveness

This aspect puts the spotlight on the need to develop music education principles that reflect and celebrate diversity. Bond (2017) highlights this subject by examining culturally responsive music education approaches. The philosopher points out the significance of incorporating into the music curriculum and pedagogy the cultural backgrounds and identities of students through appreciating and valuing them. Teachers can achieve this goal through the reinforcement of inclusivity and understanding which, in turn, will provide students with affirmative and supportive environment that will ultimately result in their sense of belonging to music education.

### 4.2 Technological Integration and Innovation

The study of Born and Davine (2015) examines how digitalization can change music education and social interactions. This pillar emphasizes on the combination of technology and innovation with music education. Born and Devine highlight how technological advancements have impacted the teaching methods, access to music education and the learning outcomes. They signal the necessity to exploit digital tools and resources to improve instruction of music. This helps in adapting to new technological environment and increasing operation of students for music.

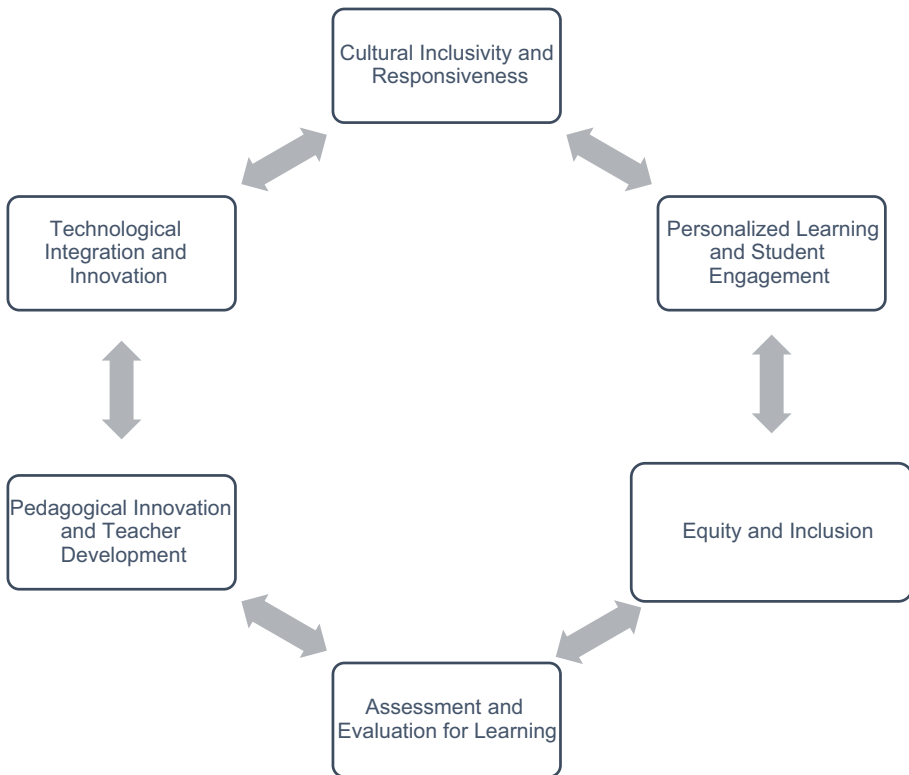
### 4.3 Personalized Learning and Student Engagement

Cevik et al. (2013) have conducted a study to explore whether music education is suitable for people of certain vocational traits. It highlights the fact that music education programs should be tailored to meet the distinct needs and preferences of each student. Cevik highlights that the investigation of musician character traits is significant because it makes teachers plan the lessons correctly and create students' meaningful involvement. If the teaching process is based on students' individual requirements and responses, then, the teachers can enable their independence, self-control and intrinsic motivation.

Table 5 Details of 5 Relevant Articles

Title	Author(s)	Objective	Keywords	Methodology	Findings	Year
Culturally responsive education in music education: A literature review.	Bond, V. L.	To review literature on culturally responsive education in music education.	Culturally responsive education, music education.	Literature review.	Provides an overview of culturally responsive practices in music education.	2017
Music Technology, Gender, and Class: Digitization, Educational and Social Change in Britain.	Born, G., & Devine, K.	To investigate the impact of digitization on music education and social dynamics in Britain.	Music technology, digitization, gender, class, educational change, social change.	A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods, including interviews, surveys, and analysis of educational and social data.	Explores the impact of digitization on access to music education, gender dynamics in music technology, and the influence of class on music learning and consumption.	2015
Who should study music education? A vocational personality approach.	Cevik, B., Perkmén, S., Alkan, M., & Shelley, M.	To examine the relationship between vocational personality traits and the suitability of individuals for music education.	Music education, vocational personality, suitability.	Surveys or questionnaires to assess vocational personality traits and their correlation with music education suitability.	Highlights the importance of music lessons in developing national and intercultural competence in students.	2013
Reinforce music foundation, promote practical ability: A New Approach to the Teaching of "Impromptu Singing" Course in "Vocational Course Straight to College Training Mode".	Dai, C., & Xiang, H.	To propose a new approach to teaching the "Impromptu Singing" course in vocational school training modes.	Music education, vocational schools, practical ability.	Involves curriculum design, teaching methods, and assessment strategies.	Introduces a new approach to teaching the "Impromptu Singing" course focused on reinforcing music foundation and enhancing practical singing ability.	2017
The influences of interest in learning and learning hours on learning outcomes of vocational college students in Taiwan: using a teacher's instructional attitude as the moderator.	Lee, Y. J., Chao, C. H., & Chen, C. Y.	To examine the effects of interest in learning, learning hours, and teacher's instructional attitude on the learning outcomes of vocational college students in Taiwan.	Vocational college students, learning outcomes, Taiwan.	Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with convenience sampling.	Provides insights into the vocational habitus of music teachers and its implications for teacher education.	2011





**Fig. 3** Model through a systematic review of 5 Publications.

#### 4.4 Equity and Inclusion

Dai and Xiang (2016) modify the teaching process of music lessons in vocational schools. This theme exemplifies such concepts as equality, diversity, and inclusion in music education. Dai and Xiang have emphasized that classes should be welcoming places for students of different cultures and experiences. In their work, they stress the fact that music education is one of the causes of settlement and justice, and that students of all backgrounds should be provided with the music education of high quality.

#### 4.5 Pedagogical Innovation and Teacher Development

Lee et al. (2011) research the role of learning outcomes obtained by the students of vocational college. This section is a discussion of pedagogical innovation and professional development of music educators. Lee and his collaborators show how music educators actually perform the role of the vocational habitus and what the implications are for teacher education. The role of teachers as a reminder brings out the point that there is a need for provision of knowledge, awareness and tools to educators for them to work creatively and use varying teaching methods that are sensitive to the students and the changes in educational environment.

#### 4.6 Assessment and Evaluation for Learning

Born and Devine (2015) go deeper concerning digital music learning access. This theme, in particular, emphasizes that assessment and evaluation play a crucial role in accomplishing the set goals pertaining to student growth and learning in music education. In this material, Born and Divine strongly suggest various assessment methods that are authentic, feedback-soliciting and self-reflecting as being the core of peer-assessment. The performance evaluation should also guide instructional decisions and ensure continued progress.

### 5. DISCUSSION

The implications unveiled in these papers are essential in understanding the multi-layered nature in music instruction; they also demonstrate the many factors that music teachers must consider to accommodate the learning environment that empowers effective teaching and learning.

Bond's (2017) perspective on culturally responsive music education shows that multiculturalism should be a priority in music syllabi and teaching methodologies. Using diverse perspectives in music education will therefore promote the creation of an atmosphere where students can understand each other's culture and appreciate what they have in common. In digital context, Born and Devine (2015) demonstrate how technology reshapes music education. Teachers who embrace technology can lead students to learn music interactively and collaboratively through the use of the latest technologies. Technological integration and innovation are among the most important factors in the modern world. They lead to advancement across all sectors. Through the use of technology and its incorporation into different aspects of life, one can increase productivity, ease of access, and connectivity. Furthermore, Taole and Nkalane (2017) found out that innovation drives this integration, pushing barriers and providing the answers to complex problems. Technology acceptance enables growth and competitiveness besides improving the living standards. Cultural inclusivity and responsiveness are no less important than diversity and understanding within the community. Indeed, pluralism in views enlivens the community, facilitating the growth of empathy and teamwork. Moving forward, Mills (2022) articulated the fact that conducting cultural responsiveness and sensitivity, individuals can generate spaces where everyone feels valued and respected. Practices that are culturally inclusive lead to the creative and innovative way of thinking by tapping into the collective knowledge and experiences of different people. Coming together, there is strong combination of technological integration and innovation as well as cultural inclusivity and responsiveness, which helps moving forward at the speed of light, but also being empathetic and up to the challenge for everyone to get the benefits.

By studying the connection between music education suitability and vocational personality traits, Cevik et al. (2013) highlight the need for individualized educational approaches. Through initiating customized learning ways, the teachers can be better able to develop student engagement, autonomy, and intrinsic motivation, which in the end makes the students excel, because they have a more positive learning experience. While the proposed new approach to music teaching in vocational schools suggested by Dai and Xiang (2017), acknowledges the critical role of equity, diversity, and inclusion in music education. Through an establishment of classrooms that appreciate and value

diversity, teachers can make sure that all students, regardless of their backgrounds, have access to quality music education, enabling social harmony and justice. Personalized learning and increased student engagement fundamentally change education system by customizing instruction to each learners' needs and preferences. Additionally, Vass and Deszpot (2017) stated that with personalized learning, students have the freedom to learn at their own pace and also in a manner that is relevant to their learning style. This method motivates students to take a responsibility for their own learning process, thus, result in an increase in their engagement and motivation. Equity and inclusion are the principles, on the basis of which every student must have equal access to quality education regardless of their background or circumstances. Besides, Lee et al. (2018) concluded that equality is achieving equity through providing the same resources, opportunities, and outcomes while inclusion is the kind of environment where all students are valued, respected, and supported. Through the application of equity and inclusion, education becomes a tool of social justice, which enables students to succeed academically as well as to make a meaningful contribution to the society.

Lee et al.'s (2011) study about conditions that affect vocational learning suggests that teacher training and pedagogical innovation should be taken into more account. Through the creation of a culture of innovation and continuous learning, educators can enhance the quality of music education and help students with their success. The line termed "The effect of digitization on the accessibility of music learning," by Born and Devine (2015), may be paraphrased as the key role of the assessment and evaluation in music education. Through the careful assessment practices, teachers can make informative decisions about instruction and keep students in the music showing their progress, which will result in the improvement of quality as well as effectiveness of music education programs. Furthermore, Bautista et al (2017) stated that pedagogical innovation and teacher development are the key elements of modern education which lead to the advancement of teaching techniques and better students' results. With pedagogical approaches that are innovative, the educators are able to address different ways of learning of the students and also their needs thus enhancing understanding and engagement of the students. In addition, embarking on teacher development initiatives ensures that the educators are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to implement these innovative strategies. These in turn will enhance the level of education. Nevertheless, as Payne et al. (2019), emphasized that assessment and evaluation for learning was combined with pedagogical innovation which in the end, offered valuable information concerning students' progress and knowledge. By using different kinds of evaluation methods and quick feedback educators could define a position of the student's strengths and weaknesses. This will help them to adjust the manner of teaching according to the learning manner, ensuring that learning is tailored and result-oriented. Pedagogy, teacher development, and assessments compose a dynamic learning system that continuously underlines efforts and students' performance improvement.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, the music education sphere has undergone a series of transformations emphasized by the development of cross-bound music programs in the vocational colleges. These initiatives

are the main way of creating cultural richness and inclusiveness in music education. Students have unique opportunities to build contacts with various music cultures, expand their cultural knowledge, and develop intercultural communication competence through international alliances and partnerships. Although these programs have multiple advantages, the problems as well need to be addressed to allow the realization of full diversity and inclusiveness. One of the main issues of cross-border music education program is its Eurocentric approach. The bias almost always results in the marginalization of the non-Western musical traditions which impedes their exposure and visibility. In this way students will get a biased view on musical diplomacy and thus this will limit their ability to holistically understand and adopt cultural diversity. Freeing the curriculum from prejudices requires joint efforts aimed at diversifying curriculum and repertoire to ensure the coverage of genres of all musical regions. Furthermore, the promotion of critical thinking and communication by the students to surface the hidden biases and shape a learning space that is free of barriers. Language and communication issues also arise in cross-border music programs, particularly in classrooms where the students speak different languages. Despite music being widely considered as a universal language, conveying the nuances of musical expression is challenging due to cultural and linguistic differences.

To tackle these challenges, teachers need to resort to holistic means of communication e.g. multilingualism and real engagement. This can be supported with the integration of technology to aid in virtual exchanges and partnerships that enables students of diverse linguistic backgrounds to collaborate meaningfully across cultures. Also, the unbalanced power relation in the cross-border programs may result in inequality and therefore make it difficult to create inclusiveness. The unequal distribution of resources and opportunities can occur between different economies of highly developed countries and less fortunate regions. As a matter of fact, marginalized educational and social backgrounds may be a source of discrimination and unequal opportunities in programs, which only aggravate the existing inequality issues. In order to balance the power disparities, the guiding principles of fairness and inclusiveness must be followed at all levels of program planning and implementation. This means not only providing equal access to resources, supporting students from underrepresented groups and tackling problems of discrimination and prejudice within schools and universities. Nevertheless, cross-border music programs are the most effective in bringing to light compassionate and humanistic artists who are trained to deal with the multifariousness of the world. Through cultural awareness raising and promotion of intercultural communication, these initiatives encourage societies to be more cohesive and equitable. In the future, teachers must have an integrated approach that will cover all the aspects that are important for the students from different backgrounds.

## 6.1 Implications

The implications of this study exist not only in the academic level but also in the practical field of music education. The findings demonstrate the value of conducting the cross-border music camps according to the principles of cultural diversity, inclusiveness, and providing younger generations with the competencies and knowledge they need to be able to adapt to an ever-changing world. Educators and schools can use these insights in developing their curricula, pedagogical methodologies and support systems. In this manner, the students will get the knowledge which is culturally relevant. Additionally, the research emphasizes the significance of coordinated measures that

combat the under-representation, language barriers, and power relations in cross-border music programs. Educational institutions can facilitate this process by means of promoting critical thinking, developing multilingual communication and applying fair policies and practices. Ultimately, the task will result in more inclusive educational environments that empower students from various cultural backgrounds. Hence, this study illustrates international music projects' power of building social cohesion, removing access barriers, and democratizing music education. This can be a foundation for societies that are more peaceful and interconnected. Music will then become the bridge which will unite all cultures and community through the language of music.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of this research, several recommendations can be made to enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of cross-border music programs in vocational colleges:

### **7.1 Integrate Intercultural Competence Training**

Institutes should include intercultural competence in music program curricula as a mandatory part to have prepared their students for life in multiethnic environments. This means that the development of empathy, communication, and teamwork skills are cross-cultural.

### **7.2 Diversify Curriculum**

Vocational music schools should adapt their music syllabus so that it could include a variety of ethnic styles from folk music to music from other parts of the world. Using this approach student will get good knowledge of world music heritage and also will be able to accept cultural variety.

### **7.3 Address Language Barriers**

Language barriers in cross-border music projects should be considered and should not create inequality among students as they would all get equal access to resources and opportunities. This may range from language support services, multilingual teaching, and cross-cultural communication.

### **7.4 Promote Equity and Inclusion**

Institutions should be looking for proactive measures to achieve the goals of equity and redress imbalances of power within the music programs. This could be done this way through having diverse faculty members, teaching using inclusive learning techniques, and creating a safe and welcoming environment for all learners.

### **7.5 Foster Collaboration and Exchange**

Vocational colleges should pay more attention to creating more joint, project-based work with external partners and organizations in order to provide those opportunities to be exposed to multiple cultures while learning. This could be a series of combined concerts, workshops and master classes that would accommodate music students of different nationalities where students with different cultural background work together to play music.

## 7.6 Provide Supportive Institutional Environment

Institutions should develop administrative support systems for the students who are culturally diverse, in addition to addressing their multiple needs. This can include mentor programs or counselling services specially designed for international students and also academic assistance.

The recommendations can be put in practice, and an inclusive cultural diversity can be fostered, allowing the students to understand the transformative learning, which consider the challenges of a globalized world.

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