



CULTURAL HERITAGE IN MUSIC TEACHING: THE EXPERIENCE IN CROATIA

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Abstract/Izvlaček

This study explores music teachers' attitudes toward cultural heritage education and to what extent this subject matter is implemented in music lessons. The study included music teachers (N = 61) employed in Croatian elementary schools. The results show that music teachers have a very positive attitude towards the inclusion of cultural heritage education in music teaching and that music teachers believe such resources should be part of the music curriculum. The findings also show that some dissatisfaction is present among music teachers regarding the way such topics are presented in the music curriculum and their overall representation in music lessons.

Keywords:

cultural heritage education, music curriculum, music teaching, music teacher.

Ključne besede:

vzgoja za kulturno dediščino, učni načrt za glasbo, glasbeni pouk, učitelj glasbe.

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Kulturna dediščina pri poučevanju glasbe: izkušnje na Hrvaškem

V prispevku preučujemo odnos učiteljev glasbe do izobraževanja o kulturni dediščini in ugotavljamo, v kolikšni meri se vsebine, povezane s kulturno dediščino, obravnavajo pri pouku glasbe. V raziskavo so bili vključeni učitelji glasbe (N = 61), zaposleni v hrvaških osnovnih šolah. Rezultati kažejo, da imajo učitelji glasbe zelo pozitiven odnos do vključevanja poučevanja kulturne dediščine v pouk glasbe in menijo, da bi morala biti vsebine kulturne dediščine del učnega načrta za glasbo. Ugotovitve kažejo tudi, da je med učitelji glasbe prisotno določeno nezadovoljstvo glede načina predstavitve dediščinskih tem v učnem načrtu za glasbo in njihove splošne zastopanosti pri pouku glasbe.

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Introduction

The concept of cultural heritage is very broad and is composed of the concepts of *culture* and *heritage* (Šošić, 2014). Ogbu (1989) speaks of culture as the totality of the way of life of a certain human group that resolves the question of its own survival through a system of accumulated knowledge, values, customs and patterns of behaviour. Culture is also discussed by Haralambos (1989), who believes that culture influences the members of society by directing their actions and determining their worldview.

The term heritage (Lat. *patrimonium*) has several meanings. In its most general sense, it refers to property inherited from ancestors and primarily means material heritage or property. In the second half of the 20th century, the role of heritage in the development of society began to be explored, as well as the possibility of strengthening the local community through the preservation and presentation of heritage (Goddard, 2012). The concept of “heritage” also provides one of the central characteristics of the phrases that determine its legal significance. These include elements such as “material culture, ritual culture, symbolic culture” and even “language-as-culture, values, beliefs”, while, in some circumstances, “ideas ideologies, [and] meanings” might also be included (Blake, 2000, p. 68).

Cultural heritage implies the overall wealth of the world - peoples, nations or a states. The preservation of cultural heritage is important for the purpose of identifying and nurturing cultural identity, defining it and presenting it to other entities. The diversity of cultural heritage enriches all of humanity, and respecting, nurturing and living it teaches us tolerance and respect, and contributes to sustainable cultural development.

The term *World Cultural and Natural Heritage* implies internationally recognized values with the aim of their preservation and protection. This term was first mentioned in 1972 in the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (UNESCO, 1972). The Convention was adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation’s (UNESCO) General Conference at its 17th session in Paris on 16 November 1972. Among its more important conclusions is a statement about the accelerated deterioration of the world’s cultural and natural heritage, owing to time and natural destruction, but also to human activity. The importance and necessity of preserving heritage as a unique benefit to every nation and state has been recognized. According to the aforementioned Convention, heritage can be cultural and natural. The domain of cultural heritage

includes monuments: architectural works, paintings, archaeological elements, elements of historical, artistic or scientific character, buildings and landmarks of great cultural significance. The domain of natural heritage includes natural monuments, geological formations, places, beauties and sights. Each state that has been a signatory of this convention has committed itself to finding, protecting, conserving and transmitting heritage to future generations for the purpose of its preservation (Forrest, 2009).

Another conference was held in Mexico in 1982, the World Conference on Cultural Policies (MONDIACULT). The main objective of this gathering was to question the knowledge gained so far and compile new guidelines for the further development and promotion of culture. In addition, the meaning of the term culture has been redefined and now implies a whole way of life. The conference highlighted the need to preserve intangible heritage and then, for the first time, the same term was used in an official document (Blake, 2017).

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was held in Paris in 2003 at the 32nd session of the United Nations. The purpose of this conference was to protect the intangible cultural heritage, respect the heritage of individuals, groups and communities, systematically raise awareness on all levels - local, regional, national and international, and provide international assistance in achieving those elements (UNESCO, 2003).

The Republic of Croatia ratified and accepted this Convention in 2005 through the *Act on the Ratification of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (*Official Gazette*, 2005). This document states the following: "Intangible cultural heritage means the skills, performances, expressions, knowledge, skills, as well as related instruments, objects, handicrafts and cultural spaces that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals accept as a part of their cultural heritage." It was also pointed out that intangible cultural heritage is manifested in areas such as oral tradition and language as a means of transmitting oral tradition, performing arts, customs and ceremonies, knowledge and skills, and traditional crafts. Protecting intangible cultural heritage means ensuring measures for the sustainability of heritage, as well as its identification, documentation, research, preservation and transmission to present and future generations (*Official Gazette*, 2005).

In the context of cultural heritage, today we are talking about immovable cultural heritage, and movable cultural heritage, as well as intangible and archaeological cultural heritage.

Since the ratification of the Paris Convention in the Croatian Parliament, the Republic of Croatia has systematically assessed, listed and promoted Croatian intangible heritage. In the period from 2005 to 2018, the Ministry of Culture listed about 160 intangible assets in the Register of Cultural Assets of Croatia, of which 17 were included in the UNESCO list of protected intangible heritage (Ministry of Culture, Republic of Croatia, 2018).

Musical heritage belongs to the domain of intangible cultural heritage and includes musical performances, expressions and musical instruments characteristic of a certain geographical area. Intangible assets are entered in the Register of Intangible Assets, but certain obstacles are often encountered in the form of terminology, categorization or the manner of performance of a particular asset (Eichler, 2020; Inawat, 2015; Pinto, 2018; Smith and Akagawa, 2009). UNESCO, as the umbrella organization of the United Nations in the field of science, education and culture, compiles a list of intangible heritage in three categories: the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, and the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices (Eichler, 2020). The UNESCO list includes 17 intangible cultural assets from Croatia, six of which relate to the field of music (Ministry of Culture, Republic of Croatia, 2019). There is two-part singing and playing in the Istrian scale, Ojkanje singing, Bećarac singing and playing from eastern Croatia, Nijemo kolo (silent circle dance of the Dalmatian Hinterland), Klapa multipart singing of Dalmatia (southern Croatia), and Međimurska popevka (a folksong from Međimurje) (Bajuk, 2014; Bonifačić, 2001; Cukrov, 2015; Hameršak and Pleše, 2018; Marošević, 2006; Primorac, 2010).

Research Methodology

Research Aim and Research Questions

For the purpose of this article, an empirical study was conducted aimed at examining music teachers' attitudes toward cultural heritage education and whether this subject matter is sufficiently included in music teaching. The research also sought to answer the following questions:

- 1) According to music teachers, how important are cultural heritage topics for education in general?

- 2) Are cultural heritage topics adequately represented in the music teaching curriculum?
- 3) Do music teachers have sufficient knowledge of cultural heritage?
- 4) How do music teachers evaluate their competences for implementing heritage themes and content in music teaching?
- 5) Is there a statistically significant difference in the responses of music teachers regarding their membership in associations that promote and nurture cultural heritage?

Participants

In the study, a convenience sample was used (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2000), comprised of 61 music teachers (48 female teachers – 78.7% and 13 male teachers – 21.3%). These are teachers who teach music from the fourth to the eighth grades of elementary school. The study included music teachers employed in Croatian elementary schools from four Croatian counties: Brod-Posavina, Osijek-Baranja, Požega-Slavonia, and Vukovar-Srijem counties. Most teachers were from the Osijek-Baranja County (26, 42.6%). Just over a third of the music teachers belong in the 42-51 age group (22, 36.07%). One quarter of the music teachers are in the under-34 age group (14, 22.95%) and the 32-41 age group (15, 24.59%). Only a few teachers belong to the age group of 52 and above (10, 16.39%). A small portion of the teachers have the title of teacher mentor (11, 18.03%) or teacher advisor (2, 3.28%). Music teachers were invited to participate in the research through the principals of the elementary schools in which they are employed. An official letter was sent to the principals of all elementary schools in the four counties asking them to invite all class teachers to participate in the study.

Methodological approach

The procedure was conducted through surveying, and a questionnaire was used as the instrument (Mejovšek, 2008). The survey was conducted in June and July 2021. The first part of the questionnaire included questions concerning the socio-demographic characteristics of the research participants: gender, age, length of service and their school county. The second part included a series of statements related to the attitudes of music teachers on the inclusion of cultural heritage topics in education in general, as well as in music teaching, and to the self-assessment of the competences necessary for teaching music lessons that include cultural heritage

topics. In doing so, a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = completely agree) was used. The survey was anonymous.

A quantitative analysis for data processing was used. Based on the results, the basic descriptive parameters were calculated: arithmetic mean (M), standard deviation (SD) and the percentage of answers obtained. Also, certain procedures from inferential statistics were used. The statistics program SPSS V26 was used for the processing of statistical data. The nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare differences in the answers according to whether they were members of associations that promote and nurture cultural heritage as a part of their activities (Petz, 2007; Suzić, 2007). Statistical significance was set at .05.

Research Results

The survey was completed and handed in by sixty-one teachers. Music teachers were asked to express their views on the importance of cultural heritage topics for education. As can be seen in Table 1, most teachers believe that cultural heritage topics are important because they develop students' respect for ($M = 4.48$) and understanding ($M = 4.43$) of other cultures, and they are also important because they enable the connection of different subject areas ($M = 4.48$). About three-quarters of the teachers believe that heritage topics are important for sustainable development ($M = 3.93$), and for slightly more than a half the teachers, topics related to cultural heritage are insufficiently represented in education ($M = 3.48$) (Table 1).

Table 1. Average values and dispersion of results for teachers' statements on the importance and representation of cultural heritage topics in education

Teachers' statements on the importance and representation of cultural heritage topics in education	N	1+2 %	3 %	4+5 %	M	SD
With a better knowledge of our own cultural heritage, we will be able to better understand the traditions of other nations.	61	1.64	11.48	86.88	4.43	.82
Cultural heritage topics are necessary for sustainable development.	61	8.20	16.39	75.41	3.93	1.03
By getting to know the topics from cultural heritage, we teach students to respect the cultures of other nations.	61	1.64	6.56	91.80	4.48	.77
Cultural heritage topics are an interdisciplinary field that allows the connection of several different subject areas.	61	1.64	8.20	90.16	4.48	.79
Topics related to cultural heritage are underrepresented in upbringing and education.	61	14.75	32.79	52.46	3.48	1.07

Note: M = average value; SD = standard deviation

Teachers were divided into two groups according to whether or not they were members of associations that promote and nurture cultural heritage as part of their activities. In comparing their responses, no statistically significant difference was found in their views on the importance and representation of cultural heritage topics in education was (Table 2).

Table 2. Differences in teachers' statements about the importance and representation of cultural heritage topics in education with regard to their membership in associations or societies that promote cultural heritage - average values, dispersion of results, Mann-Whitney U test

Teachers' self-assessment on the process of teaching and understanding cultural heritage topics	Membership in an association or society that promotes cultural heritage	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	χ	<i>p</i>
With a better knowledge of our own cultural heritage, we will be able to better understand the traditions of other nations.	Is a member of an association or society	23	4.35	.98	-.296	.767
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	4.47	.73		
Cultural heritage topics are necessary for sustainable development.	Is a member of an association or society	23	4.04	.88	-.444	.657
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	3.87	1.12		
By getting to know the topics from cultural heritage, we teach students to respect the cultures of other nations.	Is a member of an association or society	23	4.39	.94	-.325	.746
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	4.53	.65		
Cultural heritage topics are an interdisciplinary field that allows the connection of several different subject areas.	Is a member of an association or society	23	4.48	.90	-.240	.810
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	4.47	.73		
Topics related to cultural heritage are underrepresented in upbringing and education.	Is a member of an association or society	23	3.70	1.18	-1.768	.077
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	3.34	.99		

Note: *M* = average value; *SD* = standard deviation; χ = Mann-Whitney U test

The teachers were again divided into two groups according to whether they were members of associations that promote and nurture cultural heritage within their activities, and their answers were compared (Table 4). This time, the results indicated the existence of a statistically significant difference in the response to the representation of cultural heritage topics in music teaching ($\chi = -2.109$, $p = .035$). Thus, according to these results, most teachers from both groups are not satisfied with the representation of such topics in music teaching, but there is still a somewhat greater level of dissatisfaction among those teachers who are active in associations that promote and nurture cultural heritage.

Table 3. Average values and dispersion of results for teachers' statements on the importance and representation of cultural heritage topics in music teaching

Teachers' statements on the importance and representation of cultural heritage topics in music teaching	N	1+2 %	3 %	4+5 %	M	SD
I consider topics related to cultural heritage to be very important for music teaching.	61	1.64	22.95	75.41	4.15	.89
Getting to know the topics related to cultural heritage in music teaching is necessary for understanding both the tradition and the culture.	61	1.64	11.48	86.89	4.41	.82
In the music curriculum, topics related to cultural heritage are presented in an appropriate way.	61	14.75	40.98	44.26	3.41	.94
Topics related to cultural heritage are underrepresented in music teaching.	61	21.31	34.43	44.26	3.28	1.16

Note: M = average value; SD = standard deviation

Table 4. Differences in teachers' statements about the importance and representation of cultural heritage topics in music teaching with regard to their membership in associations that promote cultural heritage - average values, dispersion of results, Mann-Whitney U test

Teachers' statements about the importance and representation of cultural heritage topics in music teaching	Membership in an association or society that promotes cultural heritage	N	M	SD	ξ	p
I consider topics related to cultural heritage to be very important for music teaching.	Is a member of an association or society	23	4.21	.99	-.811	.417
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	4.11	.83		
Getting to know the topics related to cultural heritage in music teaching is necessary for understanding both the tradition and the culture.	Is a member of an association or society	23	4.43	.95	-.529	.597
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	4.39	.75		
In the music curriculum, topics related to cultural heritage are presented in an appropriate way.	Is a member of an association or society	23	3.17	.98	1.210	.226
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	3.55	.89		
Topics related to cultural heritage are underrepresented in music teaching.	Is a member of an association or society	23	3.65	1.11	2.109	.035
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	3.05	1.14		

Note: M = average value; SD = standard deviation; ξ = Mann-Whitney U test

This was followed by a group of statements in which teachers had to assess how much they know about this topic and how successful they were in teaching music lessons that cover topics about cultural heritage. The results from Table 5 show that the majority of the teachers (68.85%) are well acquainted with the tradition and musical heritage of the Republic of Croatia. The problem is that almost a quarter of the teachers are unsure of their knowledge in the field, and 8.2% of the teachers feel that they do not know enough about the tradition and musical heritage of their

country. In line with this are their answers on the competences necessary for teaching heritage topics and content in music lessons, according to which one-third of these teachers are still not satisfied with their competences for teaching topics that deal with cultural heritage ($M = 3.74$). Teachers state that they feel confident in identifying traditional instruments and Croatian tunes ($M = 4.15$), and only a small number of teachers (8.20%) state that they do not manage to cover heritage topics in class because of the burden of other content. It is a positive thing that teachers listen to music when teaching such topics ($M = 4.72\%$), but it is not favourable that only half of the teachers include dance in such lessons ($M = 3.23\%$). Just over half the teachers can present heritage topics without much previous preparation ($M = 3.51$). The majority of the teachers (83.61%) point out that music teachers need to be further educated in the field of heritage topics.

In this case as well, a distinction was made between the teachers' answers with regard to whether they were members of associations promoting and nurturing cultural heritage within their activities (Table 6). The results indicated a statistically significant difference in the teachers' answers on the knowledge of tradition and musical heritage of the Republic of Croatia ($\chi = -3.095, p = .002$) and in the answers on the success of presenting heritage topics in music teaching ($\chi = -2.525, p = .012$). Therefore, those teachers who are active in associations that promote and nurture cultural heritage possess greater knowledge about the tradition and musical heritage of the Republic of Croatia and are more successful in presenting heritage topics in music teaching than those teachers who are not active in such associations.

Note: M = average value; SD = standard deviation

Table 5. Average values and dispersion of results for music teachers' statements on the success of teaching music lessons on cultural heritage topics

Teachers' self-assessment on how to implement and understand heritage topics	N	1+2 %	3 %	4+5 %	M	SD
I know the tradition and musical heritage of the Republic of Croatia.	61	8.20	22.95	68.85	3.85	.95
I can present heritage topics and content to students without much prior preparation.	61	14.75	32.78	52.46	3.51	.96
I can identify traditional instruments, tunes and their characteristic features in the Republic of Croatia.	61	1.64	13.11	85.25	4.15	.77
I always listen to music when teaching heritage topics to students.	61	0	1.64	98.36	4.72	.49
When teaching heritage topics to students, I always dance the traditional dances of a particular homeland.	61	29.51	21.31	49.18	3.23	1.24
I am competent enough to implement heritage themes and content in music teaching.	61	9.84	24.59	65.57	3.74	.98

I don't have time to cover heritage topics because of the burden of other teaching contents.	61	65.57	26.23	8.20	2.02	1.01
I consider it necessary to further educate music teachers in the field of heritage topics.	61	1.64	14.75	83.61	4.34	.79

Table 6. Differences in music teachers' self-assessment on the success of teaching music lessons on cultural heritage topics with regard to their membership in associations or societies that promote cultural heritage - average values, dispersion of results, Mann-Whitney

Teachers' self- assessment on how to implement and understand heritage topics	Membership in an association or society that promotes cultural heritage	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	ξ	<i>p</i>
I know the tradition and musical heritage of the Republic of Croatia.	Is a member of an association or society	23	4.30	.82	-3.095	.002
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	3.58	.92		
I can present heritage topics and content to students without much prior preparation.	Is a member of an association or society	23	3.91	.85	-2.525	.012
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	3.26	.95		
I can identify traditional instruments, tunes and their characteristic features in the Republic of Croatia.	Is a member of an association or society	23	4.35	.65	-1.538	.124
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	4.03	.82		
I always listen to music when teaching heritage topics to students.	Is a member of an association or society	23	4.70	.47	-.506	.613
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	4.74	.50		
When teaching heritage topics to students, I always dance the traditional dances of a particular homeland.	Is a member of an association or society	23	3.61	1.08	-1.843	.065
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	3.00	1.29		
I am competent enough to implement heritage themes and content in music teaching.	Is a member of an association or society	23	4.00	.85	-1.523	.128
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	3.58	1.03		
I don't have time to cover heritage topics because of the burden of other teaching contents.	Is a member of an association or society	23	1.91	1.12	-.848	.396
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	2.08	.94		
I consider it necessary to further educate music teachers in the field of heritage topics.	Is a member of an association or society	23	4.57	.66	-1.666	.096
	Is not a member of an association or society	38	4.21	.84		

Note: *M* = average value; *SD* = standard deviation; ξ = Mann-Whitney U test

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore music teachers' opinions about the importance of implementing traditional content in the teaching process.

Additionally, teachers were asked to assess their knowledge of heritage topics and competence in implementing the same content in the teaching process.

The research results show that music teachers have a positive opinion about cultural heritage and believe that these topics are important because they contribute to the development of respect and a better understanding of other cultures. Previous research conducted in Croatia showed that classroom teachers and music teachers agree that, by learning about traditional music, students develop their aesthetic abilities and learn about tolerance and respect for diversity (Drandić, 2010; Dobrota and Blašković, 2014). By understanding their own culture and heritage, individuals create a more positive attitude towards the culture of other nations (Volk, 1998). Also, teachers agree that this content enables an interdisciplinary approach and cross-subject correlation in music teaching. Through heritage themes, teachers include various subject areas such as history, geography, mother tongue, music, etc. in their teaching.

A little more than half the teachers in this survey consider heritage topics essential for music lessons, and they also point out that heritage content is insufficiently represented in education. In addition, students also show interest in heritage content and consider it important (Gergorić and Sučić, 2018), and traditional music is the second most frequently listened to in musical lessons (Vidulin, Plavšić, and Žauhar, 2020). In order to nurture and preserve the cultural heritage, traditional content is necessary in the students' musical education (Drandić, 2010). Traditional music nurtures and transmits cultural heritage, strengthens national identity, contributes to connecting the community and at the same time teaches about musical elements. In a global society, people become "citizens of the world", and that is why it is important to nurture one's own cultural heritage (Ministry of Science, Education and Sport, Republic of Croatia, 2011). Additionally, teachers participating in this research point out their dissatisfaction with the presentation of heritage topics in the subject curriculum and their representation in music lessons. Similarly, slightly more than half the surveyed teachers from the other two Croatian counties believe that traditional culture is underrepresented in the music curriculum for the 5th and 6th grades (Gergorić and Sučić, 2018).

However, this study showed a statistically significant difference between two groups of teachers, where teachers who participate in associations that promote cultural heritage are more dissatisfied with the representation of heritage topics in music lessons than teachers who do not actively participate in similar associations.

Teachers who participate in cultural associations are active promoters of cultural heritage and, as such, probably attach more importance to heritage topics in music lessons.

Most teachers report that they are familiar with the tradition and musical heritage of the Republic of Croatia. However, one-quarter of these teachers indicate that they are unsure of their knowledge of this content, and a smaller number do not know enough about Croatian musical heritage. In accordance with these results, teachers self-assess their competences in teaching heritage topics. As much as one-third of these teachers are not satisfied with their competences for teaching heritage topics. One study showed that the attitudes of pedagogical students of music education depend on their previous music education and musical experiences, as well as self-assessment of and self-confidence in their own competences for teaching music (Nikolić, 2017). It is likely that music teachers are not satisfied with their own competences for teaching heritage topics as a result of insufficient education and a lack of experience in the same field.

The teachers claim that they can identify traditional musical instruments and traditional melodies, and they most often listen to traditional music during the processing of heritage topics in class. The lack of knowledge and experience in the field of heritage topics is also reflected in the fact that only half of these teachers perform traditional dances in class. Also, less than half of the teachers can teach heritage topics without major preparation. The inadequacy of education in the field of cultural heritage and the lack of competences for teaching this content were also expressed by music teachers in other Croatian counties (Drandić, 2010; Gergorić and Sučić, 2018). In accordance with earlier results, teachers who are involved in heritage associations estimate that they have greater knowledge and that they can more successfully present heritage topics in their own teaching process. The reason for this can be found precisely in the fact that these teachers know and understand heritage topics better since they have gained experience by participating in heritage associations, so they do not need much preparation for teaching heritage content. The teachers in this study emphasize the need for additional education regarding heritage topics.

In order for teachers to teach heritage topics successfully and develop the necessary competences, professional development in the same field is necessary, along with practical experience that includes musical expression, that is, traditional singing, playing or dancing.

Conclusion

The results of this study showed the attitudes of music teachers employed in Croatian elementary schools on the inclusion of cultural heritage topics in music teaching. The data revealed that music teachers have positive attitudes regarding heritage topics but are not entirely satisfied with the position these topics have in the music curriculum nor with their knowledge of and the competences necessary for teaching music lessons with regard to cultural heritage topics. Those teachers who are actively involved in the work of associations and societies that promote and nurture cultural heritage are more positive about their knowledge and competences in this area. Therefore, as a part of professional development, music teachers, as well as future music teachers during their studies, should become better acquainted with the work of such associations and instructed to be actively involved in their work.

Today we live in a globalized intercultural environment in which meeting cultural needs means understanding and accepting the values of different cultures (Campbell, 2001; Edwards, 1998; Ilari, Chen-Hafteck and Crawford, 2013), but also respecting and nurturing one's own cultural and historical heritage (Walker, 2007). How can someone understand another culture if they don't even know their own?

We all inherit cultural ties through our families, our surroundings, our early experiences, the symbols and artefacts which we grow up with, and our deep emotional being which requires cultural identity. All these things are acknowledged by all of us in ways which affirm who we are. (Walker, 2007, p. 282)

It should be pointed out that schools are the institutions where it is possible to become aware of one's own identity. The importance of cultural heritage is also emphasized in the Croatian music curriculum, and teachers are instructed to include topics on cultural heritage in music teaching. By implementing heritage themes in music teaching, we nurture a sense of continuity and connection with our historical and cultural experience, i.e., we teach students how to recognize, nurture and preserve cultural heritage for their own benefit, as well as the benefit of future generations. Without a solid sense of their past, a sense of identity rooted in time and space, students are poorly equipped to face the future (Hunter, 1988; Patrick, 1989). The findings of this study have certain limitations. The main limitation of this study was the small sample size because music teachers from only four Croatian counties were included in the research. Given the small sample size, the statistical results were limited because of their generalization to similar settings.

Therefore, in future research, it would be good to investigate the attitudes of music teachers regarding the inclusion of cultural heritage topics in music teaching from other parts of Croatia, but also music teachers from other countries. It would also be beneficial for researchers to examine the attitudes of elementary school students towards such topics in the field of cultural heritage and how to best bring such topics closer to elementary school students. It would be advisable to conduct such research on a random sample of elementary school students.

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