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Power Relations in the Curricula of Higher Education Music Courses: A Comparative Study Between Salvador-Brazil and Budapest-Hungary Focused on Black and Roma Minority Groups

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Abstract

This dissertation presents a comparative study that examines the inclusion of minority groups' music into higher education curricula, focusing on Black music in Brazil and Roma music in Hungary. The study was conducted at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA) in Brazil and two Hungarian universities: the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music (LFZE) and Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE). By exploring how these institutions approach the integration of minority music, the research aimed to address broader issues of representation, inclusivity and social equity in music higher education. Mainly grounded in the Critical Paradigm and Postcolonial theoretical frameworks, the study investigates systemic barriers, institutional practices and sociocultural dynamics shaping the inclusion or exclusion of Black (in Brazil) and Roma (in Hungary) music within these universities' curricula. The research adopts a qualitative methodology involving Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA) and Semi-Structured Interviews (SSI) with key stakeholders, including students, professors, coordinators, and external community members. These interviews explored participants' perspectives on the representation and inclusion/exclusion of minority groups' music in their curricula, as well as their views on the broader social and institutional dimensions. The data were coded and analyzed thematically, mainly guided by the critical paradigm and postcolonial theories. By grounding the analysis in critical and postcolonial theories, the study critically examines how historical and systemic inequities continue to shape educational practices. These frameworks provide the tools to interrogate and challenge aspects such as the Eurocentric orientation of curricula, the tokenization of minority groups' traditions and the potential for music higher education to serve as a pathway to social justice. Despite the cultural significance of Black music (and musicians) in Brazil and Roma music (and musicians) in Hungary, the study identifies a notable absence of minority groups' music in the curricula of the programs offered at studied universities. By focusing on UFBA, ELTE, and LFZE, this study contributes to the discourse on educational equity and diversity, emphasizing the transformative potential of integrating minority groups' knowledge higher education curricula. Such integration is a pathway to empowering marginalized communities and fostering a more inclusive academic environment. Although the results are not generalizable beyond the studied universities, the methodological framework and analytical insights offer valuable implications for broader discussions on curriculum reform in music higher education.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this inquiry is to understand the connections between music higher education courses and the societies in which they are inserted focusing on Roma and Black minority groups. As will be discussed in the next chapter, mainly based on the perspectives advocated by critical paradigms and comparative studies, this research aims to develop a comprehensive analysis about the cross-fertilizing relation between tertiary-level music programs and the academia's outside world. The investigation focuses on the comparison between music graduation courses offered by three universities in two different countries: 1) Federal University of Bahia (UFBA) in Brazil; 2) Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) in Hungary and 3) Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music (LFZE) in Hungary. It is important to stress that the findings about the researched units are intended to be compared considering the local social background and, therefore, the inquiry process includes studies related to both countries' societies.

Some similarities between the universities and the societies were fundamental to motivate the development of this comparative research with the proposed configuration. At the societal level, it is possible to mention: the existence of minority groups with important roles in national music contexts; the current social, political and economically disadvantaged condition of these groups; and the historical presence of discriminatory behavior against these people. At the university level, it is possible to mention: the relevance of the institutions in their respective societies; the existence of a relatively similar set of available music courses in the Hungarian and Brazilian sides (composition, conducting, instrument and vocal studies are offered in both universities and it can be implied that the LFZE's "general studies in music, with Kodály emphasis" suggest an inclination toward music education, with would be aligned with UFBA's music teaching course); and the university's/department's orientation to traditional western music (the number of undergraduate courses dedicated to traditional structures may suggest the universities' inclination).

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research's Central Question: How do the music higher education courses offered by the Eötvös Loránd University and Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Hungary and the Federal University of Bahia in Brazil connect their educational contents with the social struggles between the dominant social group and the Black/Roma minorities?

Research' Sub-question 1: How do the universities understand the function of music and music education in society and how their courses are expected to contribute with that function?

Research' Sub-question 2: How do the institutions deal with Roma's and Black's claims for representation in the music field and how do the universities aim to affect social and power structures?

Research' Sub-question 3: How do the UFBA, ELTE and LFZE deal with Black's and Roma's musical dimensions? (e.g. teaching/learning approaches, musical heritage, distinctive instruments, etc.)

1.2   RESEARCH ETHICS

The ethical procedures for this research were planned and implemented ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements in both Hungary and Brazil. The ELTE ethical committee reviewed the research application and granted approval on February 15, 2022, under license number 2022/59. The license was valid from February 15 to December 31, 2022, thereby covering the entire interview period. Since a significant portion of the data collection happened outside the European Union, Brazilian ethical standards also had to be met. The University of Bahia State (Universidade do Estado da Bahia – UNEB) reviewed the proposed research procedures, including data collection, participant confidentiality, and compliance with Brazilian regulations on human research. On December 10, 2021, UNEB granted ethical approval, certifying that the data collection process adhered to Brazilian ethical requirements.

2   THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Especially due to its emancipatory, active and reformist characteristics, the critical paradigm was adopted in this research. Throughout the literature, it is possible to find different meanings attributed for the word paradigm. According to Stevenson & Lindberg (2010, p. 1269), paradigm is "an example, a model, a worldview, a theory or a methodology". Lukenchuk & Kolich (2013, p. 65), defend the "threefold definition", asserting that a paradigm comprises "(1) a system of inquiry, (2) a model and (3) a way of knowing". Furthermore, the same authors consider paradigms as "larger theoretical and philosophical dispositions on knowledge that often constitute a system or tradition of inquiry" (Lukenchuk & Kolich, 2013, p. 74). However, for the matter proposed by this inquiry, a third definition seems to be the most appropriate. Guba & Lincoln (1994, p. 107) describe paradigms as "basic belief systems based on

ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions". According to the authors, a paradigm defines a "worldview" for its holder, describes the person's place, the "nature of the world" and the possible connections between individuals, the world and its sections. In this direction, a paradigm can be compared to the lenses used to see the world: if on the one hand it will undoubtedly affect the user's perceptions, on the other hand it is not capable of defining the holder's perceptions.

In the realm of the chosen paradigm it is possible to affirm that 1) ontologically, the critical paradigm (CP) assumes the existence of a shared and apprehendable reality, however, it is considered historically, politically and socially constructed; 2) epistemologically, it is assumed that the researcher and the researched object are intrinsically linked, all the findings and reflections are considered value mediated; and 3) methodologically, despite its flexibility, CP maintain the aim of unfold social constructions, enlightening power relations, contribute with the development of a balanced society and promote reconstructions of previously consolidated knowledge constructions. (Asghar, 2013).

2.1   COMPARATIVE STUDIES

The following inquiry was developed based on the perspectives and procedures posited by the following categorizations: 1) Individualizing and Case-oriented, considering the number of units and the perspectives adopted to investigate the units and the units' features (Ragin, 1987); 2) Micro-Based, considering the comparators "level of analysis" (Lor, 2019); 3) Detached, considering the values adopted by the researcher in the examination process (Schriewer, 1988); and 4) Multilevel and Holistic, considering the adoption of perspectives from different human sciences (e.g. sociological, anthropological, historical, political and economic) and the incorporation of diverse issues (e.g. race, gender, sexuality and class) into the examination processes (Bereday, 1964; Kandel, 1933).

2.2   CURRICULUM STUDIES

The curriculum manifests the course's orientation, presents the content choices and the desirable student's learning outcomes. More than selecting and sequencing study contents, the curriculum is designed to develop in the students some sets of required knowledge, skills and attitudes that are related with the course's aims. According to Perim et al. (2020, p. 3), it is throughout the curriculum that "the desirable formation of certain courses is explained […]

through the construction of curricular dynamics it is possible to define the professional who will be formed, considering the alignment of educational objectives with social and individual objectives". Following this trail, it can be inferred that the curriculum is design to develop certain "desirable" characteristics in the course's students, to adapt students to certain patterns which are required for certain society or for certain profession. Therefore, as posited by Nóvoa (1997, p. 15), the curriculum can be understood as "discourses that build our possibilities (and impossibilities) that always mark the predominance of certain points of view (and interests) over competing points of view (and interests)". Similarly, McLaren (2003, p. 86) affirms that curriculum goes beyond "a program of study, a classroom text, or a course syllabus. Rather, it represents the introduction to a particular form of life; it serves in part to prepare students for dominant or subordinate positions in the existing society".

From a critical paradigm perspective, the curriculum cannot be understood as neutral and unintentional but as a social construction which selects and includes the considered important contents and rejects the contents that are not considered important (Goodson, 1997). In this direction, Sá (2019, p. 137)[1] defends that "the inclusion and exclusion of content involves social and power relations that are capable of hierarchizing knowledge and conditioning curricula to a unique narrative about the history and culture of a country, […] excluding the knowledge concerning minority groups". Concomitantly, Arantes & Costa (2017, p. 181)[2] affirm that "the curriculum is not a logical process, but a social process in which logical, epistemological and intellectual factors live side by side with 'less noble' social determinants".

2.3   CRITICAL THEORY

According to Ryan & Sfar-Gandoura (2018, p. 18) "critical theory (CT) seeks to challenge worldviews and the underlying power structures that create them". This oversimplified description can actually be a good start point. With the aim of "underlying power structures", CT would be interested in any issue that involves power structures. In the same way, Kincheloe & Mclaren (2011, p. 288) assert that "critical theory analyzes competing power interests between groups and individuals within a society—identifying who gains and who loses in specific situations. Privileged groups, criticalists argue, often have an interest in supporting the status quo to protect their advantages". Another important feature of critical theories can be

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[1] Here and ahead: author's translation

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understood by the expression "challenge worldviews" in Ryan & Sfar-Gandoura's (2018) statement. As stated by Asghar (2013, p. 3123), critical theory does not only aims "to highlight and explain the social factors that cause oppressive and powerful groups to dominate the suppressed and repressed section of society, but also strives for a social set up based on equality for all the members". In a similar direction, Bohman (2005) suggest that a study based on critical theory should describe wrong features of present society; specify a pathway for action and changing; and provide criteria for criticism and transformation.

Therefore, by "eroding ignorance" and creating "stimulus to action" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), two of critical theorists' main intentions are revealing hidden structures which support unbalanced relations between peoples and social groups and providing applicable pathways to transform the unbalanced social realities (Asghar, 2013; Cohen et al., 2007). In order to accomplish these aims, criticalists often pursue their investigation adopting perspectives which considers different combinations of social aspects (e.g. gender inequalities, economic power, racial discrimination, educational disparities, economic status, sexuality, cultural background, ethnical diversity, political inclination, religion intolerance, classes unevenness, ethnical prejudice, historical trajectory, etc.) and their connections with the studied phenomenon (Lopes et al., 2008).

2.4   POSTCOLONIAL THEORIES

Throughout the world's history, from diverse forms, western societies have exerted influence under several peoples around the globe (Hartlep, 2009). By the means of colonization and political dominance or globalization and economic control, western cultures have affected different levels and sectors of countries in spite of their declared political independence (Castells, 2014).

Within Postcolonial theories, colonialism and imperialism are terms commonly used to characterize the uneven power relation between two peoples (Wang, 2018). In general terms, both terms defines a connection where a state or empire use diverse mechanisms to rule another country politically, economically, culturally etc. According to Wang (2018, p. 650), "both imperialism and colonialism involve forms of subjugation of one people by another".

Postcolonial theories aim to expose how former settlers continue to influence (directly or indirectly) in different instances (e.g. social, educational, judicial, political, philosophical, psychological and economical) of ex-colonized's activities (Castro-Gómez, 1998; Young,

2001). Accordingly, Santos (2006, p. 39)[3], define Postcolonialism as "a set of theoretical and analytical currents, firmly rooted in cultural studies […] which have as a common feature the focus in theoretical and political aspects of unequal relations between the North and the South in the explanation or comprehension of the contemporary world".

Adopting a postcolonial perspective, it is possible to expose the hidden structures and mechanisms that influence a myriad of elements of a society's daily life. The western patterns, values, standards and processes are consistently and systematically integrated into different societies' segments as the natural, erudite and proper ways of coping with certain phenomena (Barry, 2002). Barry (2002, p. 128) states that the "Eurocentric universalism [as a consequence of globalization and modernization processes] takes for granted both the superiority of what is European or Western and the inferiority of what is not".

Based on this comprehension and considering that the several mechanisms of colonial influence can impact on diverse contexts by different means and in unique proportions, it is possible to infer that the values, models, processes, beliefs and principles which present similarities with the western dominant culture are favorably affected by colonial systemic mechanisms. On the other hand, the more cultures, values and traditions are divergent from the dominant (Globalized, Modernized, Eurocentric), the more they are negatively impacted by coloniality and other colonial structures (Barry, 2002; Bertens, 2008). Similarly, whilst the social groups that identify themselves with the dominant culture, values, appearance, symbols, principles and philosophy are constantly beneficiated by systemic power structures, the social groups that do not find similarities with the "Eurocentric universalist" culture are intermittently harmed by the same systemic arrangements (Hess, 2015).

2.5   METHODOLOGY

In general terms, it can be outlined as a method for comparative research in educational field which consists mainly in four big phases: 1) description; 2) interpretation; 3) juxtaposition; and 4) comparison. The deeper description of these steps and the proposed connection between them are intended to orientate educational comparatists in the developments of their inquiries. Still as a process' overview, Bereday (1964) defines the first phase as "the systematic collection of pedagogical information in one country", the second as "the analysis in terms of social sciences", the third as "a simultaneous review of several systems to determine the framework

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[3] Here and ahead: Autor's translation

in which to compare them" and the fourth as the analysis of "selected problems and then of the total relevance of education" (Bereday, 1964, pp. 27–28).

2.5.1 Data collection

For the Documentary Research (Tight, 2019) the current study applies the Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA) as its methodology to investigate materials that can contribute to building the knowledge that is able to foster the proposed discussions. Bowen (2009) defines the QDA as an approach to systematically analyze files with a series of procedures that assess documents from several digital or non-digital sources.

One-to-one semi-structured interview model (SSI) was selected to guide the interview processes. SSI's mix of structure and flexibility, fixed aims and topic variation, closed-ending and open-ending questions can, simultaneously, assure the collection of the sought information and enlarge the interviews' possibilities (Adams, 2015). Since this model avoids unnecessary interactions and conflicts, the one-to-one approach was comprehended as the most adequate design for providing a safe space where participants can feel comfortable to talk freely about their thoughts.

The selection of participants aimed to achieve an appropriate "representativeness of the sample" (Cohen et al., 2007). The interviewees were selected supported by the procedures defended by "maximum variation sampling". Creswell (2013) asserts that this approach suggests: 1) the determination of some criteria that will distinguish groups of participants before the selection per se; and 2) that participants in each group should be as different as possible. In this way, the sampling design selected participants from each researched unit based on four groups: 1) coordinators; 2) professors; 3) universities' current and former students; 4) external music community.

2.5.2 Data analysis

Creswell (2013) associates the data analysis with the idea of a spiral image formed by five looping cycles. According to the author, the data analysis can be understood as the process of moving between the analytical cycles of 1) data organization; 2) reading and memoing; 3) describing and classifying the data into codes and categories; 4) interpreting the data; and 5) representing and visualizing the data.

In the first stage, this research converted the gathered data in adequate text units: the documents and interviews were transcribed and translated into English (when it is necessary).

In the second step, there was an aim of extracting initial meaning from the collected data by writing ideas, initial comments, possible pathways and short concepts alongside the data reading process. This systematic process of "data reduction" (Cohen et al., 2007) aimed to develop brief notes that can contribute with the development of the next stages. In this inquiry, the describing and classifying cycle represents the phase where the codes and groups were formed, being the "heart of qualitative data analysis" (Creswell, 2013). In the Creswell's fourth stage, this inquiry investigated the meaning of the gathered data. According to Creswell (2013, p. 187), interpretation "involves abstracting out beyond the codes and themes to the larger meaning of the data", it implies "the formation of themes from the codes, and then the organization of themes into larger units of abstraction to make sense of the data. During the "representing and visualizing" stage of this project's spiral, the discussions and findings derived from the data analysis were reported in a narrative discussion format. As stated by Creswell (2012, p. 254), "a narrative discussion is a written passage in a qualitative study in which authors summarize, in detail, the findings from their data analysis". Thereby, in the last spiral's stage, the discussions and findings derived from the data analysis processes were organized and systematized in a text report, resulting in the PhD thesis.

3   METHODS

This research examined 12 curricula of higher education music courses: two in ELTE (Art Communication and Teacher Education), 5 in LFZE (Classical Piano, Orchestral and Choral Conducting, Composition, Electronic Music Media and Folk Singing) and 5 in UFBA (Instrument – Acoustic Guitar, Popular Music – Composition and Arrangement, Composition, Teacher Education and Singing).

In total, nineteen interviews were conducted, ten in Brazil and nine in Hungary (seven in ELTE context and two in LFZE context). With representatives of sampling groups 1, 2 and 4, two interviews were expected to be conducted in each comparator. In the students' group (sampling group 3), four interviews were expected to be conducted in each investigated scenario. In Brazil, all the targets were achieved. On the Hungarian side were interviewed: 1) 2 members of the first sampling group – coordinator/curriculum developers; 2) 3 members of the second sampling group – professors; 3) 4 members of the students' group; 4) no member of the external community agreed to participate.

Due to time limitations and deadlines during the research process, a strategic decision was made to initiate data analysis before the completion of data collection. In this direction, the coding process for both interviews and documents, started after the first 8 interviews were completed. Thus, this approach led to dividing the data analysis process into three stages, each characterized by a specific set of procedures. Similar to what was done with the initial first 8 interviews, the second stage incorporated the analysis of 9 interviews and began with the careful transcription and subsequent translation of the spoken content into English. The coding phase was initiated and the remaining codes created during the first stage. While preferably adhering to the early created codes, the second stage allowed the possibility of generating new codes whenever it was comprehended as necessary, enhancing the flexibility and adaptability of the analysis. The coding process for the third batch of interviews, consisting of the final two interviews, closely mirrored the procedures of the previous stages. Given that only two interviews were missing, it was established that no additional codes would be introduced at this stage.

After completing these processes, the total number of codes 61 and the 12 groups were established In total, 436 quotations were distributed across the final codes. To create a coherent and thematic structure for the analysis, the final groups were clustered into thematic sets based on the initial framework of the interview guide. As a result, the final list of themes was refined and consolidated into: 1) Life Experience; 2) University Function; 3) Curriculum; 4) Minority Groups; and 5) Others. For example, "Curriculum" addressed the structure, flexibility, and challenges of educational programs, aligning with discussions on curriculum design, content, and coordination; "Minority Groups" encompassed the critical issues of inclusivity, representation, and challenges faced by minority groups within the context of music education. These two themes (Curriculum and Minority Groups) were identified as the most central to the research's aims and have been assigned dedicated subchapters of the "Findings and Discussions" chapter. Although the clusters "University Function", "Life Experience" and "Others" do not have dedicated subchapters, they remain integral to the analysis. Insights from these clusters provide context and supplementary perspectives that enhance the discussions on the primary thematic clusters.

4   FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This research aims to serve as a "wake-up call" for the higher education systems about their role in promoting fairer societies. Based on the presented theoretical background, universities, as influential and prestigious institutions, have the responsibility not only to reflect social values and provide a route for professional development but also to actively shape their society in a direction that embraces equity, inclusivity, and justice. Likewise, given the regional and national prominence of the studied universities, their influence extends beyond their academic communities. These institutions, as some of the most esteemed in their respective countries, can also be perceived models and benchmarks for other universities, policymakers, and the broader society.

In the same way that the social impact of the studied universities is undeniable, based on a critical paradigm standpoint, the role and responsibility of the universities in both perpetuating and/or challenging systemic inequities is also irrefutable. While their role in fostering academic excellence is well-established, it is also essential, from a critical paradigm and postcolonial viewpoint, that these higher education institutions use influence to contribute to social improvement by taking their responsibilities as "role models" and actively working aiming the inclusion of diverse perspectives and knowledge systems.

The dissertation calls for a continuous effort to address these challenges, advocating for a more inclusive and representative approach to music higher education that values and integrates the musical traditions of all cultural groups. By fostering an appropriate appreciation of the contributions of all cultural groups, higher education music courses can aimfully and powerfully serve their nation and the world by promoting positive social change.

4.1   KEY SIMILARITIES

Absence of Minority Group's Music in Curricula: In both Brazil and Hungary, a total absence (or near absence, considering the presence of the subject "Afro-Bahian Rhythms" in the Popular Music Program of UFBA) of Black and Roma music can be perceived in most of the official curricular documents.

Low Level of Detail in Curricula and Syllabuses' Documents: In both Brazil and Hungary, the general curricula and the syllabuses of individual courses are characterized by a low level of detail.

Recognition (even stereotypically) of minority groups' representatives as Talented Musicians: Both Black musicians in Brazil and Roma musicians in Hungary are traditionally recognized for their musical talents. Despite that, their music remains underrepresented in higher education curricula.

Autonomy and Authority of Professors: Due to the narrow syllabuses, the professors in both countries enjoy a certain level of autonomy that allows the introduction of diverse musical contents.

Social Challenges to Access Higher Education: The social challenges faced by minority groups in accessing higher education are a shared issue, even though the specifics are significantly different.

Eurocentric Orientation: Eurocentric orientation persists as a dominant force in both contexts, shaping the curricular and pedagogical approaches of higher education institutions. However, in Brazil, the influence of Eurocentric frameworks is acknowledged, but there is ongoing debate about their relevance, with many participants advocating for a greater inclusion of Afro-Brazilian music and other non-traditional musical sources.

4.2   KEY DIFFERENCES

Populational Representativeness: In Brazil, due to Nationwide equity-oriented initiatives, Black students are numerically represented in universities; in Hungary, on the other hand, Roma students are notably underrepresented.

Perception regarding the issue: Possibly due to the under-representativeness of Roma members in the University scenarios, the absence of minority groups' music in Hungarian curricula is not perceived as a significant issue by the interviewees; in Brazil, the relative omission of Black music is seen as an issue

Comfort/Sensitivity regarding addressing the research topic: Brazilian participants show greater familiarity with discussing minority groups' issues; Hungarian participants, on the other hand, affirmed that the topic is usually uncomfortable to discuss.

Social Integration: In Brazil, the Black groups are considered an integral part of the national social, political and cultural heritage. In contrast, the non-integrative way Hungary deals with the minority group approximates the Hungarian Roma with the Fourth World.

Initiatives for Inclusion of Minority Groups' Music into Higher Education: Based on the autonomy given to professors to shape courses' content, the Brazilian University has seen initiatives that aimed to incorporate Black music into the curricula; In Hungary, despite professors' similar freedom regarding courses' content, no inclusivity initiatives were reported.

Role of Post-Graduation and Research: In Brazil, research and post-graduation programs considerably contribute to the systematic study and gradual integration of minority groups' music into university content; in Hungary, research programs do not have a similar impact.

Curriculum Update: In Brazil, the process of curriculum updates is characterized by its long and bureaucratic nature. In Hungary, curriculum updates are faster, with greater power given to coordinators and professors to update curriculum and course content.

Student Satisfaction: Brazilian students expressed considerable dissatisfaction with their university experience. Hungarian students, in contrast, reported general satisfaction with their programs, with no complaints about curriculum coherence or content.

Coordinator Function and Coherence in Curriculum: In Brazil, coordinators generally have limited involvement in shaping the curriculum, as their roles are primarily connected to student-life or student-progress-related. In Hungary, however, coordinators are deeply involved in curricular decisions, often having significant authority to shape program structures.

Participants' Engagement with Social Orientation of the Research: In Brazil, both staff and students demonstrated, as requested by the research, a strong engagement with the social orientation of music and music field. In Hungary, participants often directed discussions toward technical aspects of music or its applicability to the job market.

Tokenization: In Hungary, the marginalization of minority music is evident, as it is often limited to tokenized mentions within courses or framed as a curiosity rather than a substantive part of the curriculum. In Brazil, tokenization mechanisms are not clear, as both staff and students acknowledge the importance of incorporating minority music into the curriculum. However, there is a clear disconnection between the staff's claims about the inclusion of Afro-Brazilian music and students' perceived experiences.

5   FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study provided a comparative analysis of higher education music programs at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA) in Brazil and Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music (LFZE) and Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) in Hungary. While UFBA reflects Brazil's artistic focus and bureaucratic constraints, Hungarian institutions prioritize employability and centralized curricular updates. These contrasts underline how broader socio-economic and historical contexts shape institutional approaches to education.

The findings revealed a shared absence of systemic minority music inclusion in official curricula across both countries. However, the autonomy granted to professors in both systems offers a significant opportunity to incorporate minority-related content. In Hungary, the centralized role of coordinators facilitates quicker adaptations to curricular needs, while in Brazil, the decentralized and bureaucratic process limits timely updates. A notable contrast lies in student expectations and satisfaction. Hungarian students, benefiting from robust foundational music education, reported cohesive and fulfilling academic experiences. Conversely, Brazilian students expressed dissatisfaction, pointing to a lack of coherence in curricula and unmet expectations, shaped by their diverse pre-university musical experiences.

Mainly grounded in the critical paradigm and postcolonial theories, this study advocates for the integration of minority group's music into higher education. This inclusion would not only enrich curricula and the educational pathway itself but would also promote equity and social justice, aligning with a broader mission of universities to create fairer societies. While the challenges are significant, the flexibility observed within these systems represents a pathway toward transformative change, where music education can serve as a tool for cultural appreciation and social development.

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