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Enhancing music education in the Peruvian Amazon: a call for urgent action

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This study focuses on music education in the Peruvian educational system, specifically in the Alto Amazonas region. Through qualitative research methods such as participant observation, video recordings, documentary analysis and questionnaires, the study assesses the state of music education and music teacher education, evaluates the musical training of individuals in jungle populations, and explores strategies for preserving Amazonian folklore. The findings reveal a lack of emphasis on music in the curriculum, inadequate teacher training, and a need to protect and revitalize folklore. Recommendations are made to address these issues, including curriculum development, teacher training, and revitalization of traditional music in classrooms. The study emphasizes the importance of integrating music into various subjects, increasing access to university music courses, conducting research, and supporting ethnomusicological studies. Urgent action is urged to improve music education, preserve cultural heritage, and provide comprehensive musical education for students in the Peruvian Amazon.

KEYWORDS

educational research, music education, Latin American culture, American studies, teacher education

1. Introduction

Music education in Peru is as diverse as its geographical reality. This is a country traditionally divided into four natural regions: coast, highlands, forests and sea, whose cultural and educational complexity requires specific studies for each of these areas. There is scant research into music pedagogy in schools in the Amazon Forest and this paper aims to fill a much-needed gap in the field of scientific research within this region. We aim to assess the role of music in the Peruvian Primary Education Curriculum; evaluate the adequacy of the musical training received by teachers, according to the current syllabus; and its impact on the population with a on the Amazonian jungle geography. As our starting point, we hypothesise that, in a country like Peru, with so many cultural manifestations and where popular music is so varied and intrinsic to the daily life of its inhabitants, the schooling system should be a seedbed for this culture and teachers should be the promoters of its expansion and preservation of Amazonian folklore.

The Peruvian Amazon occupies more than 60% of the country, which is divided into five departments and the Department of Loreto is the largest territory. In the summer of 2014, for 2 months, we had the opportunity to work as music teachers in a school in Lagunas, a village in the province of Alto Amazonas (Department of Loreto). Alto Amazonas has a population of 40,506 inhabitants distributed in 243 indigenous communities. These communities are grouped into 11 different ethnic groups and are organized into 5 different ethno-linguistic families. It is important to note that the indigenous population in the Loreto region represents 48% of the total. This was the first contact we had with the jungle and throughout this experience we got to

know different communities, their educational peculiarities and part of their musical heritage. Two years later, we were able to return to this and other villages as teachers and choir conductors. Specifically, we had contact with the Instituto de Educación Superior Pedagógico Público Monseñor Elías Olazar (hereinafter IESSPP MEO) in Yurimaguas, which was the first institution in the Alto Amazonas Province to receive accreditation from the Peruvian National System of Evaluation, Accreditation and Certification of Educational Quality.

During this second visit, we observed many of the virtues of the Peruvian educational system and identified some of the needs of the students in those regions of the Amazon jungle. The absence of adequate material resources and specialized teacher training in fields like music education stands in stark contrast to the increasing interest of certain educational institutions in delivering high-quality education and conducting research. Such interests are consistent with the search for innovation and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) set by the United Nations, particularly SDG 4, which advocates the right to quality education for vulnerable people, and SDG 10, which seeks to reduce social inequality and promote a sense of fulfillment and self-esteem of people in vulnerable groups.

This study is part of the Marco Agreement for International Cooperation and a specific agreement for teacher exchange between the University of Valladolid (Spain) and the Instituto Pedagógico de Yurimaguas (Peru) established during 2017. Both agreements were put into effect in 2018 and began with a third visit to the jungle: a teaching stay in Yurimaguas to provide training in Musical Expression Didactics to IESSPP MEO teachers and their students, as well as aspiring teachers from elsewhere in the region. It was also attended by many pre-school and primary school teachers from the city who had no knowledge of music, despite having to teach it as part of the Art curriculum in their schools. The two visits that took place prior to the Marco Agreement laid the groundwork for this teacher training, in that we attempted to understand the musical heritage of Lagunas, Yurimaguas and its surrounding territory through observation and informal conversations with different citizens. As a result, we were able to perform an initial diagnosis of the situation and assess the relevance of music in the area. We understood that in the Peruvian jungle, while present-day popular music thrives (especially at festivals), there is very little presence of traditional music, children's songs and songs sung in native languages. Further, their inclusion in the educational sphere is scarce and, in our opinion, insufficient. As a result of these initial conclusions and bearing in mind that the objectives of the Agreement included not only the organization of coordinated teaching activities between the two institutions but also the implementation of joint research projects, we decided to take advantage of our stay to carry out a more in-depth study. The aims of this were to verify the veracity of this initial diagnosis, identify the root of the problem, if any, and make a proposal for short-, medium- and long-term actions to help solve it.

In preparation for this, we proceeded to carry out a research design in several phases (detailed below), the central stage of which took place during the period in which we were teaching at the IESSPP MEO in Yurimaguas. During this visit we made a thorough analysis of the educational and musical situation in the area through multiple visits to surrounding communities where we had the opportunity to participate in their festivals and ceremonies. Furthermore, we were able to establish direct contact with the students who attended the teacher training, the academic authorities of the center and other educational authorities. Finally, during the 2019–2021 academic

period, a series of open-ended questionnaires were carried out to complete the information obtained.

About the related scientific literature, the situation of music in the curricula of South American countries has been the subject of several investigations, including the contributions of Violeta Hemsy de Gainza, one of the leading scholars in the field. In 2000 Gainza reviewed the situation of music education in Latin America in the years prior to the turn of the century and described the situation as “confusing and discouraging” (Hemsy de Gainza, 2000, p. 6). She proposed a profound reform based, among other things, on a renewal of higher musical education with the highest quality criteria that takes into account the plurality of existing pedagogical models and defends the use of repertoire and musical instruments specific to each country. The same author (Hemsy de Gainza, 2010) updated her vision a decade later and expanded it, referring not only to Latin America but to the situation of music pedagogy throughout the world. She advocated a practical music education that moved away from traditional methodologies and academicism that in her view, destroy creativity. She envisioned music pedagogy as active participation in music, focusing on what she called the “original musical experience” (p. 45).

In the journal *Eufonía* of that same year, Oliveira (2010) in line with Abril and Abril (2017) refers to the need for Latin American education policy to improve equal access to education and culture for all inhabitants and maintain the relevance of the arts and music education. Furthermore, she urges policy makers to follow the indications of the Ibero-American Cultural Charter of 2006, which recognises the importance of emerging cultures derived from migratory movements and technological progress. Finally, she highlights the cultural diversity in Latin America and the impact this should have on music education in the region.

Along the same line of study as the previous works, Jorquera et al. (2020) present three educational models and paradigms that, according to the authors, have predominated in Latin American music education, highlighting, firstly, the “Jesuit” model that separates those who know how to play music from those who do not and centre on learning the score. Secondly, they introduce the “conservatory model” that secularizes music education and also places the score at the center, and finally, the aesthetic-formalist paradigm that rationalizes and decontextualizes music and focuses on the exact interpretation of the score. Further, they defended Elliott's (1995) praxial philosophical approach, which seeks to provide knowledge that is useful to students and gives importance to the context of music, as well as encouraging a greater relevance of music in the daily life of each individual. Finally, they make a series of suggestions for music education centered on the student and his or her creativity, that promote openness to other cultural proposals and search for balance between the aural and the written aspects of music.

With regard to studies dealing with the specific situation of music education in Peru, Sánchez Málaga (2000) presented a paper at the First International Seminar and Workshop on Music Education in Lima in which he reviewed the milestones of music education in the country since its possible birth in 1539 in Cuzco. He pointed out the year 1842 as the moment of the appearance of music in the teaching plans, within the subject of Physical Education. During the first half of the 20th century, it was mainly patriotic songs and school songs that featured in the music syllabus, and there was a shift towards practical music that promoted singing. In the second half of the century, the

development of music education began to stagnate due to its inclusion in the subject of art education, which eventually led to its disappearance in favor of painting and drawing. In this presentation, based on Gainza, he suggested some guidelines that should be followed in order to foster quality music education in the 21st century, and highlighted the inclusion of the most recent trends in music pedagogy.

More recently, [Mendivil and Mendivil \(2020\)](#) have carried out research comparing music education in Germany and Peru, where they describe the situation in this area as vulnerable due to the loss of musical presence in the Peruvian National Curriculum. By becoming part of the art course, music is at the mercy of the teacher's decision as to the amount of time devoted to musical activity. They also point out that the training of such teachers does not necessarily have to be specific, so there are many art teachers in Peru who have no musical training. They also warn that classical music is more highly regarded than other musical expressions, such as those of oral tradition, which has led to the latter being relegated to the background, with the danger, in our opinion, of falling into oblivion and even disappearing.

The above issues have recently been expanded upon by [Almoguera \(2020\)](#) in his doctoral thesis where he analyses music education in Peruvian Educación Básica Regular in 2020. In it, he stresses that the art teacher is not necessarily a music specialist but can be any teacher who is not a full-time teacher. He adds that pupils' own families value other subjects more highly than music. She also points out that this situation has worsened in 2020 due to the arrival of Covid-19, which has meant the move to online teaching, and other areas of knowledge have been given priority over music.

One of the difficulties we have encountered in tackling our project has been that many of the studies reviewed tend to ignore the idiosyncrasies of jungle areas, which means that some of their conclusions and proposals cannot be transferred or applied to the Amazon. However, there are some exceptions, such as the research on the music of the Peruvian jungle that has been collected by the author [Cornejo \(2011\)](#). The author collected the names of various music studies in the country in a bibliographical review, listed them on the website "Música peruana" and included a section dedicated to books, articles, field recordings and radio programmes related to Amazonian music. For example, there is a compilation of Aguaruna songs in CD format ([Bolaños, 2003](#)), a master's thesis on the songs related to Ayawaska ceremonies ([Brabec de Mori, 2001](#)) and several research studies on the music of the Shuar ([Conservatorio Nacional de Música, 1989](#)), the Tikuna ([Cruz et al., 2011](#)), or the Shipibo ([Lucas, 1971](#)). As we can see from their titles, these are usually specific initiatives that compile some musical pieces from indigenous tribes, but, in general, they do not include a programme to reactivate the repertoire in classrooms for its dissemination, which we consider fundamental.

On the other hand, with regard to studies dealing with music teacher training in Latin America, the journal *Profesorado* published in 2010 the monograph *Formación del profesorado de música: Planes de estudio en Europa y América Latina* which includes several articles analysing teacher training in South American countries. In particular, [Mateiro \(2010\)](#) analyses 45 curricula for music teacher training in 8 South American countries, but in her study she excludes Peru. The author refers to the possibility that exists in Chile, Colombia and Venezuela of training for a degree in education with a specialisation in music education or music pedagogy, something that, as we shall see, does not exist in Peru. It is noteworthy that the monograph to which this article belongs is intended to disseminate the results of the

"Evaluation of Music Teacher Training Study Plans in Latin America" carried out by the ALFA (América Latina Formación Académica) research network. In reference to this issue, [Aróstegui \(2010\)](#), in the final part of the monograph, stresses that in Latin America there is no homogeneity in the curricula aimed at training music teachers and that they do not pursue a clear objective.

Finally, the main objectives of the research were to analyse the presence of music in the Peruvian education system, to examine the musical education of Peruvians living in the jungle populations and to check whether the institutions have implemented strategies for the preservation of Amazonian folklore. With these aims in mind, specific objectives have been developed, such as analysing the [Resolución Ministerial N° 281-2016 \[Ministerio de Educación\] \(2017\)](#), examining the Primary Education syllabus of the [Resolución Viceministerial N° 204-2019 \[Ministerio de Educación\] \(2019\)](#), corroborating the musical training of teachers in the jungle at all educational stages and the presence of songs in native languages in the areas under study.

In this article, therefore, we share the main sections of the final report following the last stay in the Peruvian Amazon rainforest, from the statement of the research problem, the review of the related scientific literature and the corresponding legislative documentation, already carried out in this introduction, the description of the research design and the method used and, finally, the results, discussion and conclusions, with an explanation of limitations and a proposal for actions and ideas for future research.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Context, design and phases

The research was conducted in the city of Yurimaguas and the towns of Lagunas, Balsapuerto, Shitari and Santa María in the Department of Loreto, Province of Alto Amazonas, in the Peruvian Amazon jungle. The design of the work was carried out during the 2017–2018 academic year. We chose a qualitative research process because of the flexibility it offers, the possibility of staying at the study site for several weeks in order to learn about the musical and educational reality of the area ([Latorre et al., 2003](#), p. 205) and because we considered that two of its basic data collection techniques, participant observation and the questionnaire, were suitable for our analysis. Once we had analysed the data obtained by observation during our stay in Peru, we saw it appropriate to expand the information from Spain by means of questionnaires sent by e-mail.

The process began with the choice of the research problem and objectives, the choice of variables and the planning of the different phases of the research. Both legislative documentation and previous studies were reviewed and contact was made with those responsible for the educational institution where we were going to teach Didactics of Musical Expression (the IESSPP MEO). Furthermore, it was agreed that the fieldwork would be carried out during the months of July and August 2018, coinciding with our teaching period. We then selected the data collection techniques and made a flexible and as realistic timetable as possible, taking into account the possibilities of travel and the difficulties involved in working in areas that do not have 24-h light or roads that facilitate communication, which means making the transfers along the river, with the corresponding extension of the established deadlines. Once the stay was over and all the data

collected had been analysed, it was decided to carry out a questionnaire and a selection of participants was made. The questionnaire was answered by 152 people, including teachers from different towns and schools in the study area and political and academic authorities. After selecting the sample, the questions were drafted and sent by email during the 2019–2020 academic year. The process of collecting responses was completed in the 2020–2021 academic year due to the communication difficulties we encountered. Finally, the information obtained was analysed, contrasted with previous data and a report of the results was drawn up, followed by a series of proposals for the medium and long term in response to the existing situation.

2.2. Variables

The variables that have been measured are classified into three groups: those related to the presence of music in the Peruvian Basic Education Curriculum, the adequacy of the musical training of Primary Education teachers and the impact of the musical training of Peruvians in the daily use of music and in the preservation of their folklore. Specifically, the main variables were: the number of hours of music in each grade of Primary Education, the number of musical competences included in the Curriculum, the number of institutions of higher musical education and to which ones the inhabitants of the jungle have access, the number of subjects and hours of music didactics in the training of Primary Education teachers and the knowledge of songs in native languages by Primary Education pupils.

2.3. Data collection instruments and sample

As previously mentioned, one of the first data collection techniques we used was documentary analysis. Specifically, we reviewed the [Resolución Ministerial N° 281-2016 \[Ministerio de Educación\] \(2017\)](#) and the Guidelines for teaching the area of art and culture, a guide offered by the Ministry of Education for Primary School teachers (2018). The questionnaire was answered by 152 people and was made up of 11 questions that fell into four categories: the curricular areas, the hours of music and the musical competences in the curriculum. In addition, we opted for participant observation as the main strategy during the period of our stay in Peru and the taking of notes in a diary as a field notebook, instruments with which we analysed the use of Amazonian folklore in and outside school, the musical training of teachers and the subjects of music didactics. We stayed with the community of Corazonista brothers who ran the Pedagogical Institute, which facilitated access to information on a daily basis with informal interviews over lunch and allowed for a deeper immersion in the area. We actively participated in the organisation of some festivals and religious celebrations such as the night of San Juan, the Umisha, San Isidro or the national festivities of Yurimaguas, and we were able to spend several days in the surrounding villages such as Lagunas, Shitari, Balsapuerto or Santa Maria, whose remoteness from the main cities increases the difficulties encountered in the development of musical expression and the maintenance of the original song repertoire. Photographs and videos were also chosen as documentary support techniques.

On the other hand, we chose the open-ended questionnaire to complete the information obtained, which was sent by e-mail and answered by a total of 152 people. With this instrument, we analysed the musical training of the teaching staff, the subjects of musical didactics, the use of Amazonian folklore in the classroom and the possibilities of access to higher musical education institutions in the country. The questionnaire was previously revised by a Yurimagüino because there are words that have different meanings in Spain and Peru and we considered it especially important that all the questions were correctly understood, and then it was validated by a group of four experts from the University of Valladolid. In addition, it was extended with some questions addressed exclusively to the political and academic authorities who participated because they could provide other relevant data unknown to the rest of the addressees. Regarding the sample, we chose active teachers of different ages, populations and schools, some of whom had attended our Didactics of Musical Expression classes, students of the IESSPP MEO of Yurimaguas, the director and several teachers of the same, a teacher member of the Diocesan Office of Catholic Education of the Apostolic Vicariate of Yurimaguas and a teacher working for the Ministry of Education.

Throughout all phases of the research, we proceeded repeatedly to the analysis of the information obtained with a critical perspective ([Osse et al., 2006](#)) and, in order to guarantee the rigour of the results, as suggested by [Latorre et al. \(2003, p. 216\)](#), triangulation was used by developing different techniques for collecting information and the results were contrasted with two experts (a school principal and a Ministry of Education worker). In addition, the data collected were checked with the participants who also reviewed the final report of the study, providing details that have been added during the writing of this article.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Music in the National Curriculum Design for Primary Education in present times

After analysing the National Curricular Design of Regular Basic Education, approved with [Resolución Ministerial N° 281-2016 \[Ministerio de Educación\] \(2017\)](#) and the Primary Education Curricular Programme which was approved with [Resolución Ministerial N° 649-2016 \[Ministerio de Educación\] \(2017\)](#), and which was revised and modified in 2017, we note that the curricular areas of the Primary Education curriculum are in [Table 1](#).

The only curricular area that includes musical activities out of the 9 is art and culture, as it is included in what the Guidelines for teaching the area of art published in 2018 and culture consider artistic languages, i.e., dance, dramatic arts, music, visual and audiovisual arts and other forms of artistic creation such as weaving, jewellery, rituals or digital culture. This means that only one sixth of the arts and culture course, which is taught 3 h a week during the 6 years of Primary School, is devoted to music. Therefore, if the class time devoted to each of these artistic languages were to be divided equally, only 30 min per week would be devoted to the practice of musical expression, which is totally insufficient to obtain meaningful learning that reaches the long-term memory of pupils and can favour their

TABLE 1 Curricular areas of primary education, grades and hours per week.

Curricular areas	Degrees of studies					
	1°	2°	3°	4°	5°	6°
Mathematics	5	5	4	4	4	4
Communication	5	5	4	4	4	4
English	2	2	3	3	3	3
Social	3	3	4	4	4	4
Art and culture	3	3	3	3	3	3
Science and technology	3	3	4	4	4	4
Physical education	3	3	3	3	3	3
Religious education	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tutoring and educational guidance	2	2	2	2	2	2
Hours of free availability	3	3	2	2	2	2
Total	30	30	30	30	30	30

Source: [Resolución Ministerial N° 649-2016 \[Ministerio de Educación\] \(2017\)](#).

comprehensive education, as a properly designed curriculum should guarantee.

On the other hand, only two of the 30 competences indicated in the Primary Curriculum Design are directly related to art: number 5 “Critically appreciates artistic-cultural manifestations,” and number 6 “Creates projects using artistic languages.” According to the Curriculum, the first of these involves the combination of three skills: “Perceives artistic-cultural manifestations, contextualises cultural manifestations, and reflects creatively and critically,” and the second combines three other skills: “Explores and experiments with the languages of art, applies creative processes and evaluates and socialises their processes and projects.” Once again, we see that interest in developing artistic competences is remarkably low, as they account for less than 7% of the total. Moreover, specific references to musical expression disappear, becoming part of the so-called “artistic manifestations and languages,” which makes it easier for musical content to be relegated to second or third place and to depend, as mentioned by the authorities who took part in the study, on the personal interest and training of teachers.

Furthermore, the data collected through the questionnaires reveal that music textbooks do not exist, and this lack of support materials hinders the task of the teacher, who often does not have a quality musical education and even, on many occasions, has no musical knowledge at all. The creation of textbooks would not only provide a guide to the appropriate content for each level, but would also help teachers with little training to organise the content, create activities to work on it and even know how to evaluate it. Schools do not usually have a specific classroom for this subject either, which means that they do not have adequate space for movement activities, musical instruments or other fundamental materials for good teaching practice, which in this area should be characterised by being eminently active.

In addition, the questionnaires confirm that there are very few opportunities to study music in the Upper Amazon outside school,

which also makes it difficult to obtain additional musical training. In Yurimaguas, for example, the participants mentioned that there are only two or three musicians who give private lessons at unaffordable prices, and that only in some schools there are bands in which self-taught musicians teach some notions of how to play certain instruments. The majority of children who are interested in learning music have to be self-taught.

3.2. Music teacher training in the province of Alto Amazonas

Access to formal teacher training in the Upper Amazon is limited to the IESSPP MEO in Yurimaguas. However, the questionnaires carried out confirm that, due to the shortage of teachers in this area, it is common to hire secondary school graduates as Primary School teachers, especially in native areas, and graduates of technical careers such as nursing, construction or aquaculture, both from Technological Institutes and from the University. This reality means that many of the Primary School teachers currently working in the jungle have not received pedagogical training, nor are they familiar with relevant aspects such as the basics of teaching-learning procedures, the organization of schools or the stages of child development.

In Peru, higher music studies can be undertaken at various institutions such as the National University of Music (until 2017 called the National Conservatory of Music), the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru or the Peruvian University of Applied Sciences, among many others. However, although in all regions there is a Higher School of Artistic Training (ESFA), the economic and geographical situation of the jungle prevents them from going to these educational centers where they could be trained. The main difficulty is that in Loreto, the ESFA is only based in Iquitos. Given the impossibility of going to this city, many future teachers have only the training in music that they have received at the aforementioned IESSPP MEO.

Based on the Primary Education syllabus of the [Resolución Viceministerial N° 204-2019 \[Ministerio de Educación\] \(2019\)](#), which is applied in this institution, we can see that music training is received as part of two courses (two subjects of one semester each) throughout the 5 years of Primary Education studies. The first of these is “Art, creativity and learning,” a course belonging to General Education, with a teaching load of 4 h per week and three credits, which is taught in the third cycle during the first semester of the second year of studies. In the description of the subject, music appears as one of the seven artistic manifestations that are worked on together with visual culture, visual artistic expressions, dance, theatre, performance and digital arts, i.e., if the weekly course time is divided equally, students will work on specifically musical content for less than 35 min a week. On the other hand, as part of the Specific Training, the course “Integrated Arts for Learning,” with a teaching load of 4 h per week and three credits, is taught in the VI cycle, i.e., the second semester of the third year of studies. In its description, reference is made to artistic-cultural expressions at local, national and global level, but it is not specified which expressions are to be worked on and there is no specific mention of music content. Moreover, during the months of teaching at the Pedagogical Institute, it was observed that the teaching staff who teach these courses did not have any specific musical training either, and the graduates who answered the questionnaire confirmed that they had not received any musical training during

their years of study. Therefore, the students who are currently completing their 5 years of studies at the only Pedagogical Institute in Loreto have not worked on the musical content and are therefore unable to teach it in the schools where they are going to teach.

Another fact expressed by respondents to the questionnaires is that there are very few art teachers in this province who have any knowledge of music. Given that art graduates are practically non-existent in the jungle area, and that at pre-school and Primary levels it is not necessary to have a specialisation in music, it is common for institutions to hire people who have some kind of artistic sensitivity, be it towards crafts, dance or theatre, to teach art classes in schools. These teachers focus the development of the subject on the speciality they have, which is not usually music. There are also schools in which this course is taught by teachers from other courses who do not have a full timetable and need hours to achieve it, so that the subject is divided between several people. In contrast, in Secondary Education, the art teacher must have an art teaching qualification in order to be appointed, although music or art amateurs, such as dance or arts and crafts, are also frequently employed when there are no qualified teachers in the forest. The lack of musical knowledge of the active teaching staff, together with the scarce appearance of music in the Primary school curriculum, means that pupils at this stage, with some exceptions, do not receive musical training at school. We believe that this situation should be resolved as soon as possible by the educational authorities, given the proven benefits of musical training for children, such as the development of creativity and cognitive skills, the stimulation of memory, the promotion of collaboration between the members of a group, the improvement of concentration, the provision of an alternative form of communication and expression, the development of empathy, respect and a sense of belonging to a group (Kennedy, 2002; Fernández Herranz, 2013; Tobar, 2013; Caycho, 2018; Prados, 2019; López-Casanova et al., 2021).

3.3. Dissemination of the musical heritage of the Peruvian Amazon among children and young people

In order to find out if there is a song and instrumental repertoire in the studied area and to be able to make a diagnosis of the situation of conservation and dissemination of this repertoire, we used the questionnaire and participant observation as ethnographic methods. During our stays in the Peruvian Amazon jungle, we observed that a large part of the vast musical heritage of its communities, which includes songs in native languages such as Kukama or Shawi, is being forgotten. This is largely due to the fact that their presence in the educational sphere is scarce and insufficient, and that the learning of songs is not encouraged in schools due to the aforementioned lack of knowledge of teachers in subjects related to music. Another reason is the lack of a system for preserving the repertoire, together with the strong presence of recently created urban popular music in the jungle, especially at festivals. As a consequence, during leisure time, children do not often use musical games and children's songs of traditional music or songs in the native language, which means the loss of free, culturally charged entertainment activities that contribute to the integral development of children and train their social skills.

4. Conclusion

An analysis of the National Curriculum Design for Primary Education shows that music is a limited part of the curriculum. The fact that it is included in the arts and culture course, with 3 h a week over the 6 years of Primary education, could lead us to different conclusions, but if we bear in mind that music appears as one of the six artistic languages considered as such, we can deduce that a maximum of 30 min a week is devoted to musical expression. This, too, is contingent on there being an available teacher with the appropriate training at the school. Furthermore, of the 30 competences indicated in the Curriculum Design, only two are related to artistic manifestations and with very little presence of music. The lack of musical instruments and specific classrooms for music classes in the institutions, and textbooks for teachers and students leads us to conclude that there is a lack of interest on the part of the administrations in art education in general and music in particular.

During our stay we noticed the absence of learning native songs in the classroom, which means that the musical heritage of the Peruvian Amazon is in danger of extinction. These circumstances, which not only affect Peru but are common in many other countries, are mainly due to the lack of knowledge on the part of the educational authorities about the multiple virtues of musical education in the integral formation of people (Figueiredo, 2010; Lorenzino, 2011; Abril, 2017; Alvarado and Lira-Cerda, 2017). It is urgent that the scientific studies results carried out on this situation be transferred to these authorities so that the necessary adaptations to the current educational policies can be made.

On the other hand, we understand that the programming of the training received in the Higher Pedagogical Institutes by the future teachers of the Art and Culture course in Primary Education, which consists of two courses of one semester each in 5 years of studies, added to the fact that music is a small part of the content of these courses, implies a very low level of knowledge in Didactics of Musical Expression and has irremediable repercussions on the pupils of the Primary School. The fact that the teachers themselves do not usually have any musical training compounds the problem. However, critical to highlight the difficulty of the Institutes to find teachers with a university degree in music in the localities of Alto Amazonas due to the distance of the official centres of higher musical studies, the difficulties in communications with land transport and the scarcity of economic resources, subsidies and scholarships that could facilitate access to such studies (Rolando, 2012). In this sense, we believe, once again, that it would be fundamental that the political authorities with competencies in this area show a greater interest in education through art by facilitating teacher training, since, if the pedagogical institutions themselves cannot hire teachers with quality musical training, future teachers suffer the impossibility of providing this training in schools and this means that musical content is not included in the classes, which means that the students' training is incomplete.

This situation is also contributed to by the fact that in Primary Schools it is not necessary to be a specialist to be able to teach the Art and Culture course. The hours of these classes are usually distributed among teachers who need to complete their timetable, as an addition. In fact, the shortage of qualified teachers means that people without specific qualifications are hired. As a result, in the province of Alto Amazonas, Primary school pupils only receive musical education if they are lucky enough to have a teacher with some musical interest or

ability. Otherwise, as they pointed out in all the questionnaires, music is ignored and not taught.

In response to the situation described above, we believe that authorities of the Peruvian Ministry of Education should establish an action protocol for the safeguarding and promotion of the musical heritage that includes new educational policies with three main objectives: the promotion of quality musical training for teachers, giving priority to those in the jungle due to the difficulties already mentioned, the inclusion of musical education as a fundamental part of the educational system, and the preservation of the existing repertoire together with its expansion with newly created compositions. With regard to the first objective, in order to solve the lack of teacher training, the Ministry should encourage and facilitate access to university music courses for the inhabitants of the jungle provinces (Aróstegui and Cisneros-Cohernour, 2010). To this end, there is an urgent need to promote financial aid for transfers to the relevant institutions and the payment of tuition fees, and to provide room and board in the places where these degrees are taught. In addition, new universities should be created in the areas furthest away from where they are taught, or the qualifications of existing centres in these areas should be extended, and the number of hours of subjects with musical content in the National Basic Curriculum Design for Initial Teacher Training should be increased. With regard to the second objective, music should have a greater presence in the National Curriculum Design for Primary Education both in terms of content and timetable. The musical contents of the art and culture course should be broader, and it would be very appropriate to include musical teaching strategies such as the use of songs in the rest of the subjects. With regard to the third objective, it is necessary to encourage research into the teaching of musical expression in order to update teaching strategies in this area, adapting them to the reality of each region, and to carry out ethnomusicological studies. These studies should include the recording and subsequent analysis of the song and instrumental repertoire of native communities, together with its conservation and dissemination throughout the educational community, with special emphasis on schools. This study is aligned with emerging decolonial perspectives (Locke and Prentice, 2016; Alvarado and Lira-Cerda, 2017). We propose the creation of a programme for the reactivation of the traditional repertoire in the classroom, including musical games, and another that encourages the composition of new pieces that increase the existing heritage.

In the short term, thanks to the Marco Agreement for International Cooperation that we have established between the University of Valladolid and the Instituto de Educación Superior Pedagógico Público Monseñor Elías Olazar, a series of initiatives have been proposed, such as holding free annual workshops on Didactics

of Musical Expression, taught by professors from the University of Valladolid, open to all teachers in the area and students at the Institute, so that they can receive basic musical training. On the other hand, recordings of original songs in Kukama Kukamiria will be made in collaboration with the corresponding department, since the IESSPP MEO teaches Intercultural Bilingual Education. Later on, it would be very opportune to produce textbooks and other didactic support materials on musical expression that would complement the training received and provide appropriate tools for each course.

Data availability statement

The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

Author contributions

SP: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Supervision, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. CR: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Supervision, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

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