



Nurturing our activist agency as music teachers: a holistic evaluation of a workshop for student teachers

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ENG Abstract: The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, through the Framework for Global Competence, establishes that educational systems should foster critical and responsible activism, underlining the need for university programs, including those oriented towards the initial training of music teachers, to be committed to fostering an activist spirit in their students. This study aims to evaluate the acquisition and development of activist agency in university students training to become music teachers. The research methodology is linked to hermeneutic pedagogy, since a workshop was designed and implemented in order to promote the acquisition and development of students' activist agency. The results showed that student teachers autonomously assumed activist commitments, that the collective work through the workshop allowed for the configuration of a professional community that provides support and encouragement; and, finally, that activist agency was internalized through rational and experiential pathways. In conclusion, the generation of trusting relationships represents a primary support that helps community spirit to prevail.

Keywords: human rights education; teaching reflection; culturally responsive pedagogies; critical thinking; global competence; music teacher education.

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1. Introduction

The practice of music education should always be understood as a political act (Aróstegui, 2024; Leung, 2024), as the detriment that music teaching has undergone in curricular terms is a product of education policies applied to school systems (Angel-Alvarado, 2019; Aróstegui, 2016), and as such it is crucial to foster an activist spirit in music teachers. In this regard, the vision of Rusinek and Aróstegui (2021) becomes relevant, since a music education that satisfies student needs and current social demands is only feasible if normative frameworks take care of such issues and if there is a competent teaching staff to implement the prescribed curriculum. Currently, the Global Competence Framework established by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD; 2018) encourages the promotion of critical and responsible activism, making it plausible for communities to live together in harmony to favour sustainability from approaches based on social justice, inclusion, and interculturality. This Framework is used unrestrictedly in evaluation processes established by the Program for International Student Assessment, popularly known as the PISA Report, allowing education policies in different OECD member states to be adjusted to this supranational agenda. Given this context, it is time to educate music teachers in activism, focusing the formative processes towards the acquisition and development of learning. Activism implies that students are protagonists and responsible for their own educational processes (Barcellos & Wade-Chung, 2022).

Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the acquisition and development of activist agency in university students who are developing as music teachers. A workshop focused on activist agency was designed and

applied to achieve this objective. The workshop was taught as a voluntary extracurricular course that does not grant academic credits within Chile's music teacher education program. That is to say, participating students aspire to obtain a Bachelor of Education degree and the professional title of Music Teacher for Secondary School Levels, under Chile's double qualification system established by Article 31 of the Constitutional Organic Law for Teaching (2005). Accordingly, the following research question was established: How do university music teacher education students acquire and develop their activist agency during their participation in the workshop?

2. Activist agency in music education

Activism is defined as a liberating action in the face of an oppressive reality (Freire, 2010). Hence, activist agency implies a struggle towards the redefinition of normative frameworks that generate social vulnerabilities and precariousness (Molina, 2018), seeking to establish new mindsets in favour of autonomy, equal opportunities, and the humanization of social systems (Echeverría, 2023). So, education must open up to dialogical models that favour awareness and problematization in order to promote the empowerment represented in activist agency (Angel-Alvarado *et al.*, 2024a), with students becoming protagonists who are responsible for their own learning processes (Barcellos & Wade-Chung, 2022). To meet this challenge, it is necessary to have empowered teachers as agents of change (Grant, 2019), as the ability to apply humanising actions that address issues of social justice, inclusion, interculturality, and sustainability is crucial to the promotion of pedagogical self-determination.

Angel-Alvarado *et al.* (2024b) suggest three formative purposes for orienting music education towards activist agency. First, changes should not only be desired, but also one must mobilise to apply transformative initiatives that contribute to the redefinition of normative frameworks. Second, partnerships must be established between social movements to broaden coverage of new mindsets, achieving greater social impact. Lastly, practical, participatory and humanising activities must prevail in educational situations, as they reflect the application of dialogic models oriented towards the empowerment of students.

In light of the above, activist agency cannot be separated from reflective practice, as it is necessary to build knowledge based on experience (Ruffinelli, 2017). In other words, experiential actions must be articulated with rational processes in an iterative manner (Epstein, 2014). Then, initial music teacher education should serve as a formal space for acquiring and developing teacher reflection (Georgii-Hemming *et al.*, 2020). Thus, future teachers will be able to appropriate activist identity, becoming convinced of their role as agents of change and transformation (Grant, 2019; Zamorano-Valenzuela, 2020).

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) embraces activist agency because, through global citizenship (Unesco, 2015), it seeks an education that favours the full development of the human personality, aiming to foster the capacity for discernment and thus ensure the exercise and defence of human rights and sustainable development. The OECD also aligns itself with the promotion of activist agency through the exercise of critical and responsible activism that is defined in the Global Competence Framework (OECD, 2018). Therefore, it is implicit in supranational agendas that initial teacher education should be conceived as a space that encourages teacher reflection, as this will make it feasible to redefine the normative frameworks from autonomous, humanising, and socially conscious visions (Echeverría, 2023).

Hence, university music teacher education programs discuss the need to awaken and develop teacher reflection in their students. In this regard, Domínguez-Lloria and Pino-Juste (2022) assert that educational processes should not be limited to musical and pedagogical knowledge but should also promote personal development in order to promote activist agency. That is to say, students should mobilise to overcome the adversities facing music education, whether they regard access to or delivery of the former, that are defined by the social system (del Barrio *et al.*, 2023). Angel-Alvarado *et al.* (2024b) report that, even when university programs strive to promote constructivism and critical thinking, students tend to act individually and not collectively. Lastly, Chen-Hafteck (2024) suggests the application of culturally responsive pedagogies in university contexts in order to ensure that all students have humanising experiences that respect cultural differences and diverse ways of life.

For all these reasons, it is necessary to generate educational instances that favour teacher reflection during initial music teacher education, which should not only be encouraged from the practicum onwards, but in all the different subjects established in curricular designs, which should open spaces for educational reflection on social justice, inclusion, interculturality, and sustainability (Angel-Alvarado *et al.*, 2024a). Thus, a university workshop was developed and applied to enrich music teachers' activist agency, reporting relevant findings in this study.

2.1. Design of the workshop

The workshop was entitled Nourishing Our Activist Agency as Music Teachers, and aimed to encourage the development of activist agency in student teachers enrolled on a music teacher education program through active methodologies. The researchers decided to hold five 50-minute sessions (Table 1), where different social issues would be discussed in order to foster the students' critical thinking. The final activity was oriented towards the collective elaboration of the Activist Agency Tree, using cardboard and crayons to express teacher reflections that gave an account of activist agency through drawings and messages.

Table 1 Planning of the five workshop sessions.

| AIM IN EACH SESSION | ACTIVITIES | USED SUPPLIES | ACTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT |
|--|--|--|---|
| Aim in session 1: To find the meaning of activist agency in one's own life. | Watch a video and discuss the definition of activist agency. Through a brainstorming task, the students reach a definition of activist agency. | Music Video: "Latinoamérica" (Grupo Calle 13). Digital App: <i>Mentimeter</i> . | Each student creates a drawing and writes their ideas about the concept of activist agency. |
| Aim in session 2: To project decolonial research to question one's own teaching practice. | The students share visions on a video. In groups, they read fragments of a book coordinated by de Melo <i>et al.</i> (2019). They discuss the key content of the book, answering generating questions. | Film: "Abuela Grillo" (Director, Denis Chapon). Book "Perspectivas decoloniales sobre la educación". Coordinadores: A. de Melo, I. de Jesús Espinosa, L. Pons y J. I. Rivas. (2019). | Each student creates a drawing and writes their ideas about the concept of activist agency as music teachers. |
| Aim in session 3: To propose an educational situation with activist agency that involves body expression. | The students watch a video and discuss its educational value. They develop a group educational situation based on body expression and instrumental practice. They present the learning situation to the class and discuss activist agency. | Film: "La rítmica Jaques-Dalcroze" (FIER). Toolkit of musical instruments. School Curriculum for the Music subject. | Each group presents the educational situation. Each student creates a drawing and writes their pedagogical ideas about activist agency on it. |
| Aim in session 4: To create a collective work incorporating a soundscape in its design and activist agency in its content. | The students watch a video and reflect on applying creative tasks in classroom settings. They play Dixit, pair up, and create music based on images they like. They present the created music to the class, sparking creative reflection. | Film: "Gana siempre la creatividad" (La Petite Cordonnier Team). Card games Dixit. Toolkit of musical instruments. | Each group presents the created music. Each student creates a drawing and writes their musical ideas about the activist agency on it. |
| Aim in session 5: To identify one's own activist agency as a music teacher. | The students listen to a song and reflect on activist agency. They build the Activist Agency Tree. They make a decision on where in the university to install the Tree. | Song: Manifiesto (Víctor Jara). Cardboard, scissors, glue, crayons, and so on. Materials created in previous sessions. | Collective dialogue during the construction and installation of the Activist Agency Tree. |

Table of own elaboration.

3. Method

This quasi-experimental and qualitative research is conducted using hermeneutic pedagogy as defined for music education (Angel-Alvarado *et al.*, 2019), as the musicological elements interact systematically and continuously with educational actions through the four approaches to music didactics (Georgii-Hemming & Lilliedahl, 2014). Specifically, basic subject didactics is based on aspects of the explicit curriculum, ethno-didactics on the factors that determine the hidden curriculum, challenge didactics focuses on the variety of content from globalization perspectives, and, lastly, anthropological didactics explores the particularities of the learning experience of each individual, considering both logical and emotional aspects.

This study is primarily approached from an anthropological didactics perspective because it focuses on the acquisition and development of activist agency and, to our understanding, the generation of awareness involves achieving both logical comprehension and emotional significance regarding social issues that affect access to and the delivery of music education. The above does not imply that the other three approaches will be disregarded, as they must be incorporated into the model to evaluate their contributions and threats to anthropological didactics. Hence, the analytical focus should not be limited to individual student experiences but should also extend to collective actions and the sense of community that emerges in the university case.

3.1. Participants

The study was conducted with students from a university music teacher education program, thus ensuring that the participating institution was committed to fostering initial music teacher education. It should be noted that the university where the study took place is state-dependent, but that, by law, it enjoys the same autonomy as all Chilean universities. The non-probabilistic sample was of a deliberate type, as it was imposed as a selection/exclusion requirement that the student teachers had passed the initial practicum established in the curriculum that defines the university's music teacher education program.

Fifteen students participated in the workshop, of whom seven self-identified as females, seven as males, and one person self-identified as non-binary. In socioeconomic terms, the participants in the sample indicated that they belonged to the middle class, except for one individual who self-classified as lower class. Only one student indicated belonging to an indigenous community, specifically stating that they were of Mapuche

ethnicity. All the participants reported having musical experience prior to their enrolment at the university, and the vast majority stated that they had or were participating in musical ensembles outside the university while studying on the music teacher education program. There was a significant variance in the musical instrument in which the participants had the highest proficiency, even when compared by gender, with the guitar, violin, piano, and various types of percussion highlighted.

From a pedagogical perspective, the participating students indicated that they performed well in the school system's classrooms during their initial practicums. Lastly, the sample was divided regarding their perception of the university's institutional commitment on matters of social justice. Nonetheless, there was a general consensus that the university does not make sufficient efforts to support students from different backgrounds.

In light of the above, it should be pointed out that the Teacher in charge of the workshop was part of the research team. However, she should be regarded as another member of the participating sample because, in addition to having complete freedom to design and implement the workshop, she can provide relevant information from a pedagogical perspective. More precisely, she was immersed in the educational situations, allowing her to directly perceive the rationalities and emotionalities that would either favour or threaten the construction of activist agency in the participating students.

3.2. Materials and procedures for data collection

Each of the workshop's five sessions was recorded audiovisually to allow not only for an appreciation of the actions carried out by the different educational agents during the classroom activities, but also to make it possible to access the discourses and the gestures used during moments of collective interaction. Consequently, the audio and video recordings have been used to review the attitudes and actions of student teachers regarding the debate on activism, as well as to monitor the construction of activist agency in a depersonalised manner. Through the reading and signing of an informed consent form, it was agreed that data confidentiality would be applied without restrictions, so that images and audio could only be used for research analysis purposes. It is necessary to add that the ethical conduct concerning the collection and processing of data was continuously evaluated by the Ethics Committee of the Alberto Hurtado University.

To complement the information collected through the recordings, student teachers were asked to answer questions that delved into their own social justice experiences in music education (for example, could you share a personal experience that relates music education to social justice?). These questions had to be answered in writing and under pseudonym through a SurveyMonkey form in two instances: first, before starting the first session of the workshop; and second, after completing the last session. This dual instance allows us to evaluate the development of activist agency from an anthropological dimension, establishing holistic learning processes according to the guidelines defined by hermeneutic pedagogy for music education (Angel-Alvarado *et al.*, 2019). The completion of the form was also accompanied by an informed consent letter, which was presented on the homepage of the digital document, and the decision to submit was revalidated on the final page, as it required users to re-enter their pseudonym before pressing the SEND button.

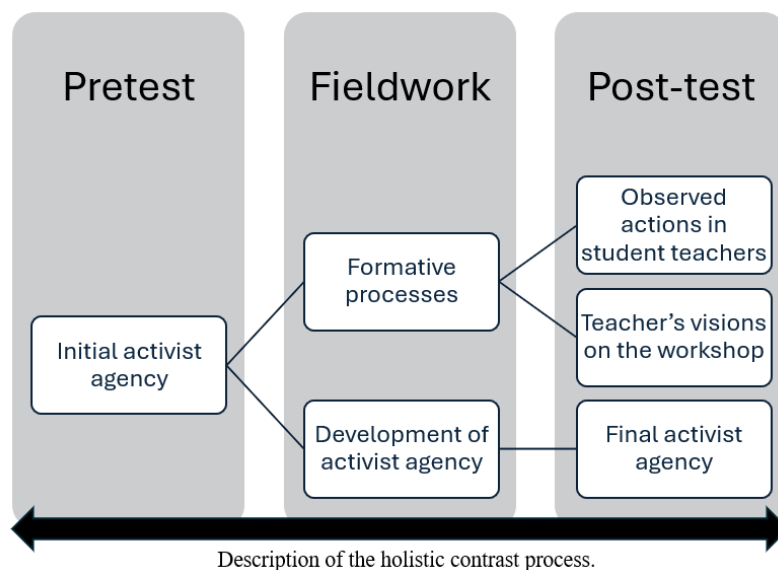
Lastly, the Teacher in charge was required to complete a report providing detailed information regarding the strengths, aspirations, results, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats of the workshop, focusing on four relevant positions. First, the flipped classroom approach, as it is expected to promote constructivist pedagogies. Second, the class size, as all individuals within the classroom setting must have the freedom and opportunity to express their visions and ideas without being limited by an overpopulation of students. Third, the experiences of the instructor-teacher during the implementation of the workshop, as it is necessary to determine whether the responsible Teacher felt comfortable and confident during her pedagogical practice or not. Finally, the monitoring of the moral growth of the students, since the Teacher was able to perceive whether her students were managing to build their activist agency or not within the formative activities in the workshop.

3.3. Data analysis procedures

The workshop title is an analogy, as each session contributes to the growth of a tree that, in the end, bears fruit. This tree is built collectively, so it is appropriate to understand the discussion activities as processes of teacher reflection and, ultimately, the tree's construction as a product that expresses the activist agency achieved by the group of students.

The above is an example of a hermeneutic circle because the responses obtained before starting the workshop, through the SurveyMonkey form regarding their own social justice experiences in music education, serve as a diagnostic assessment of the students' activist agency. Subsequently, the filming of the sessions and the report provided by the Teacher account for the quasi-experimental study, evaluating activist agency in a formative manner. Finally, the responses gathered during the completion of the SurveyMonkey form after the workshop serve as an accreditation evaluation regarding the activist agency developed by the students (Angel-Alvarado *et al.*, 2019). So, a holistic contrast process has been applied, considering a post-test and a pre-test (fig. 1).

(fig. 1) Hermeneutic pedagogy for music education.



4. Results and discussions

Even though the study has not established a research hypothesis, the intention was for the students to internalise activist agency, serving the holistic process of contrast as an analytical strategy. According to Angel-Alvarado *et al.* (2019), this contrast gives an account of the internal validity of the research in deductive terms, as the educational situation is designed based on the findings reported in previous studies concerning the field in question. In this particular case, the workshop's design has considered the Global Competency Framework (OECD, 2018) and curricular analyses of Chilean university programs involved in the initial music teacher education (Angel-Alvarado *et al.*, 2024b). In light of the above, it is expected that the final findings of the current study will not only be consistent with the literature concerning activism and agency, but will also provide additional information to reach a deeper understanding of it from an empirical perspective. Therefore, the presentation of the results is divided into a diagnosis of, as well as the formative process behind and consolidation of activist agency.

4.1. Diagnosis of activist agency

According to the participating students, social justice in music education can be understood from three perspectives. The first focuses on safeguarding the dignity of the human being, inviting the generation of new pedagogical mindsets that humanise educational processes (Echeverría, 2023). For instance, Student 8 states: "treat all my learners as human beings and not as inferior beings... that everyone is an important participant in activities". The second perspective is oriented towards the application of culturally responsive pedagogies (Chen-Hafteck, 2024), as all students should have humanising experiences through music, beyond their individual conditions and cultural differences. In this line, Student 1 expresses: "every learner, regardless of their context, can feel encouraged by their environment through musical experiences". Finally, a perspective of empowerment is identified, as it is necessary to confront the systemic adversities that arise (Freire 2010; Molina, 2018), forcing the music teacher to assume a mobilising attitude (del Barrio *et al.*, 2023). For example, Student 11 conveys: "social justice in music education... is related to the vindication of different marginalised groups, especially in Latin America. This means bringing indigenous peoples to the forefront, reminding us of our origins".

In general, student teachers are able to identify personal experiences that relate music education to social justice. However, there are repeated cases that refer to lyrical analysis from historical, cultural, and demographic positions. For instance, Student 3 tells us:

During my secondary education, I listened to (...) songs by Víctor Jara. The teacher, by giving context to this musician's story, generated a dialogue in which many coincidences with the contexts of social inequality experienced by my peers were revealed (...). It was a space for critical reflection and listening to those who felt those songs made sense.

However, student teachers also reported experiences linked to teaching practices. On the one hand, positive experiences stand out, as Student 8 narrates: "Being in a music reading and writing workshop, where almost nobody knew much, the teacher explained to us in a thousand different ways so that we could all learn". On the other hand, the narratives were not always positive, with negative narratives emerging that point in three directions. First, Student 9 criticised the lack of resources for the school subject of Music, relating that, during the practicum, "the music teacher had his own music room. However, he only had musical instruments that had been damaged over the years". Second, Student 11 reported that during the practicum, she covered content relating to Latin American music with students from the first grade of secondary education (14 to 15

years old); however, “learners immediately began to make racist and xenophobic comments, without taking into account what this means... It caught my attention, and it is something I would like to reflect on with them”. Lastly, Student 15 stated that she implemented “an activity where the theme was focused on the social uprising” of 2019, but the parents filed a complaint with the school management. The above reveals that the student teachers not only identify violations and precariousness linked to tangible material, but also question cultural situations oriented towards social stereotypes and family ideologies, having interests in mobilising in order to become agents of change (Angel-Alvarado *et al.*, 2024b).

Finally, most participants think that a human rights music education is possible; however, they do not provide a clear and solid justification to support this vision. Specifically, their arguments refer to generic ideas, such as: “music is socialising and as social agents we can work from there for fairer human rights” (Student 2). Only Student 6 expressed a contrary position, stating: “I think that a music education based only on human rights is overvalued. Let it be clear that I am not against human rights, but I also believe that there are more topics through which we can approach a music lesson”.

4.2. Formative processes of activist agency

During session 1, student teachers agreed on three characteristics of activist agency. First, personal and public identities are intertwined because, as one Student pointed out, we are “part of a whole, but everyone has their own identity”. Second, this interweaving manifests in daily actions, as another Student asserted that it involves “ethics and values and, if you do not have them, your deficiencies are also exposed”. Hence, a third Student proposed to advance from conviction to action, as “one has their own beliefs and principles, but they do not remain only in the mind, one must act with coherence (...) To take action on my convictions”. The above displays an intention to develop as a person in moral and ethical terms (Dominguez-Lloria & Pino-Juste, 2022). Consequently, the participating students showed a great willingness to delve into activities oriented towards teacher reflection (Georgii-Hemming *et al.*, 2020; Ruffinelli, 2017).

Session 2 focused on decolonial research, raising questions of a social nature. For instance, a group of Students said, “With the internet, sometimes you do not search, because people take the first thing they find”. This represents a criticism of the obstinacy in finding answers without enjoying the process. Hence, another group proposed new pedagogical mindsets favouring a sense of community. Specifically, they stated: “generate discussion groups in the classroom and discover what topics can emerge from learners”. Additionally, they referred to the importance of “constantly re-educating ourselves as professionals, updating ourselves on what is happening”. Therefore, there is an approximation towards at least two formative purposes defined by Angel-Alvarado *et al.* (2024a), as they propose initiatives to redefine the normative frameworks, as well as focus on the sense of community because they understand that collective, participative and humanising work favours the acquisition and development of learning.

Sessions 3 and 4 focused on interpretative practice, as student teachers had to create collective musical performances. Thus, they questioned the need to establish instructions in body expression activities, as they have experienced complete freedom to dance, gesture and move in space during activities that did not provide any oral instruction, but proposed tempo changes or new timbral resources appeared. Thus, the student teachers began to think that sometimes musical responses come naturally, and instructions can be an obstacle because they serve to rationalise something that is rather intuitive. They further appropriate the sense of freedom during the actions of musical creation, as their works refer to creative autonomy, the processual validation of mistake, the manifestation of identity, personal and professional growth, as well as the importance of living in community. It should be noted that all the creations alluded to positive attitudes involuntarily, because they did not establish agreements, which one Student defines as “a leap of faith in the face of the challenges that arise”. Consensually, student teachers gave session 4 the following name: “melody of the awakening of collective knowledge”. In this line, the missing formative purpose of Angel-Alvarado *et al.* (2024a) appears: the need to establish activist partnerships. Specifically, the sample was divided into groups, and the common themes were addressed, achieving a disinterested consensus on the name of session 4.

Finally, student teachers again characterised activist agency based on their practical experiences in session 5. Concretely, a Student admitted, concerning the workshop: “it has been a space of encouragement to reaffirm that what I am doing is right and to swim against the current, (...) even if it scares me”. This teacher reflection displays the importance of the sense of professional community, where music teachers can openly and proactively discuss problems that concern them in order to overcome systemic challenges. In other words, new mindsets should be discussed and validated in professional communities (Georgii-Hemming *et al.*, 2020), fostering the collective development of the activist identity (Zamorano-Valenzuela, 2020). Another Student called on his peers to “transform things (...) hopefully the new cultures begin to question some things”. This also implies reaching new pedagogical mindsets and reflects an intention to become an agent of change (Grant, 2019). Therefore, it is an invitation to the student teachers not to simply be content with the learning achieved, but rather to continue putting into practice what has been learned to mobilise music teaching. Considering all of this, the Activist Agency Tree has been constructed (Fig. 2).

Regarding the above, the Teacher valued the application of the workshop and did not rule out proposing it as a formal activity within the curricular design of the university program. Among the strengths and opportunities, she highlighted the flipped classroom approach because student teachers were sensitised regarding the topics discussed and encouraged to participate in the discussion instances, as well as in the musical interpretation and creation activities. She thought that the class size allowed for the opening of “nourishing and broad dialogues” (Teacher), although she considered the workshop’s nature as a voluntary

educational space to represent a threat because it tends to overload the students' academic agenda. Concerning her own pedagogical experience during the application of the workshop, the Teacher recognised that even though the proposed objectives were achieved and the students' willingness to participate was always favourable, there were opportunities for improvement that she would consider for the replication of the activity. Specifically, she always found it difficult to comply with the allocated time, because she is used to having much more time for her lessons. The Teacher also recognised that she was "late in finding the appropriate place to put the devices (recorder and microphone) and, therefore, she was late in starting the workshop". In future editions, she will not be forced to use recording devices and, if the workshop is included in the curriculum, the times can be discussed internally. Lastly, the Teacher perceived that the morale of her students had grown because they felt that "each session was a different space in which they could freely express their opinions on topics that are not dealt with on a daily basis at the university". She adds that "each student was developing, from their sensitivity, history and context, their own meaning about concepts such as activist agency, humanization of music education and decolonial and Latin American perspective" (Teacher), which was reflected in each session through drawings and phrases that were later incorporated into the Activist Agency Tree. In any case, the Teacher has perceived that her students think that "the school system does not seem to allow the development of the themes proposed by the workshop. They envision schools as rigid and not very reflective spaces, so including topics such as human rights and activist agency could be a complex task".

4.3. Consolidation of activist agency

According to student teachers, social justice in music education is understood from a practical viewpoint, as music teachers must be able to "recognise the diverse current demands (...) in order to guide teaching" (Student 2). Specifically, Student 11 pointed out: "it means acting, talking, reflecting, guiding lessons to see music from all its areas, not just playing. Understanding that (...) it manifests thoughts, emotions, and processes that connect us to each other". Therefore, student teachers consider that experiential actions should be articulated with rational ones iteratively (Epstein, 2014), as teacher reflection is nourished both by theoretical knowledge and by experiences lived during the teaching practice (Ruffinelli, 2017). Considering the practical vision, the need to implement culturally responsive pedagogies is reaffirmed (Chen-Haftech, 2024), as the promotion of collective and creative work should be fostered "respecting the process of each student, understanding that each being is different and equal at the same time" (Student 8). This is linked to cultural democratization and equal opportunities in access to musical learning (Unesco, 2010), because all students should have "the same possibilities to study music regardless of their personal, cultural and social condition" (Student 9). At this point, it is worth noting that the safeguarding of human dignity and the sense of empowerment are not relegated to the background, as they are understood as essential elements of culturally responsive pedagogies because the decolonial position implies the dignification of cultural diversity, either in individual or collective terms (Hernández & Mariano-Viloria, 2020).

Regarding the personal experiences that disclose the link between social justice and music education, student teachers referred mainly to pedagogical events that they have had to pay attention to during their practicums, which displays the strengthening of activist identity (Zamorano-Valenzuela, 2020). For instance, Student 14 said: "In my practicum, I see (...) how a bond develops with those learners who are usually quieter. I feel that it has to do with social justice because there is always a lack of support for those (...) who participate less". Another example, Student 2 told: "During my practicum, I was able to learn from a class where the inclusion of neurodivergent students was present. The space was adapted to their needs, and the teacher allowed musical performance from exploration and respectful and attentive accompaniment". In both accounts, culturally responsive pedagogies prevail, as the humanization of educational situations is expressed through the respect and value of cultural differences and the diversity of lifestyles.

Finally, all student teachers considered that a human rights music education was possible, providing solid arguments to support the vision. Even Student 6 thought it was plausible, saying: "I believe that education should start from there, as it is the basis of an education for humans and by humans". In this regard, Student 11 is the one who puts forward an argument representative of the whole group, stating:

Music is the expression of human experience in every sense. It shows us the concerns and experiences of those who create it and (...) listen to it. When certain messages resonate, collectivity is created, debate is created, and a space for reflection is generated.

5. Hermeneutic pedagogy and the holistic contrast process

We can assert that the participating student teachers have managed to internalise activist agency after the workshop because their visions regarding the understanding, experience, and plausibility of implementing human rights music education display a process of maturity. This is not only seen in the contrast between the consolidation and the diagnosis of activist agency, but it also came to light during the last session of the workshop, as the group recognised themselves as a professional community that represented a safe space, and that they felt encouraged to act with activist agency during their teaching work in order to revitalise the pedagogical mindsets in music education. All this implies having acquired and developed activist identity (Zamorano-Valenzuela, 2020), as critical pedagogies and senses of educational democratization are encouraged (Jorquera-Jaramillo, 2024). Consequently, there are interactions of a hermeneutic nature between theory and practice, which are revealed by iteratively articulating rational and experiential processes

(Epstein, 2014). Specifically, hermeneutic pedagogy gains appreciation through the four approaches to music didactics (Georgii-Hemming & Lilliedahl, 2014).

1. *Basic subject didactics*. According to Angel-Alvarado *et al.* (2024b), university programs try to promote constructivism and critical thinking, but student teachers resist because they prefer to perform their tasks individually. In this regard, the workshop has enhanced the sense of professional community, highlighting the flipped classroom as a constructivist resource to promote critical thinking.
2. *Ethno-didactics*. The workshop activities aim for each student teacher to continually construct their own meaning of activist agency, which involves both experiential and rational internalization processes (Epstein, 2014).
3. *Challenge didactics*. The workshop proposes various activities, including personal reflective practice, discussion around decolonial scientific literature, group musical interpretation practices, and collective creation processes. All this has raised pedagogical concerns and questions from different perspectives of activist agency.
4. *Anthropological didactics*. The holistic contrast process shows that the student teachers have been able to internalise activist agency more deeply, both in terms of rational understanding and experiential appropriation. All of this is consistent with the Teacher's vision because, in her opinion, the participants developed their own sensory, historical, and contextual meaning of activist agency. Therefore, the holistic character of the contrast process is ratified, as not only is the comparison between post-test and pretest taken into account, but the Teacher's vision regarding the moral growth of her students is also considered. Both means of analysis have proved to be complementary. To this, the Activist Agency Tree should be added as a product that highlights the joint work of the group of student teachers.

Given the above, we can infer that the three formative purposes that orient music education towards activist agency are fulfilled (Angel-Alvarado, 2024b). First, student teachers assumed commitments among themselves to act in an activist manner during teaching tasks in order to apply new mindsets that revitalise music education. Second, the group of student teachers was configured as a professional community that provides support and containment, generating bonds of collective trust that serve as a seed for establishing activist partnerships once they graduate. Lastly, practical, participatory, dialogical, and humanising activities have prevailed, allowing the experiential and rational significance of activist agency to be achieved. In light of the above, activist agency becomes a continuous process of construction that never ends, so that this group of student teachers has only begun to embark on a journey that will continue for the rest of their professional lives, involving both moments of nourishment and others of decay.

(fig. 2) Activist Agency Tree.



6. Conclusions

After evaluating the acquisition and development of the activist agency of university students who are educated as music teachers, it has become evident that the three formative purposes that make it feasible to achieve a human rights music education are based on the appropriation of culturally responsive pedagogies, as cultural differences and the diversity of lifestyles are dignified. In other words, the professional community is configured by accepting and valuing each member's cultural distinctions, thus enriching the intercultural visions of the group through the differentiating features. In conclusion, activist agency is built within a community that provides support and encouragement, despite the differences that may exist, as the generation of trusting relationships represents a primary support for the community spirit to prevail.

Last but not least, three implications are established. From a theoretical standpoint, it is crucial to continue enquiring into the line of research concerning activist agency and human rights music education, as it is necessary to raise and validate new pedagogical mindsets that serve to revitalise the processes of music teaching. From an institutional standpoint, professional music schools, universities, and conservatories must open up to discuss the relevance of pedagogical traditions in the educational contexts of the 21st century, where the respect and value of human dignity is an inalienable right. Finally, from a pedagogical standpoint, it is essential for each teacher to question their own educational practice on an ongoing basis, being open-minded in matters of social justice, inclusion, interculturality and sustainability.

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