

Strategies in Teaching Music to Diverse Learners: Elementary Teachers in Focus

Marie Joy A. Albios¹

¹The Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc.
Davao City, Philippines

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Abstract: This qualitative study examined the experiences of elementary music teachers in using effective strategies for teaching diverse learners. Using a phenomenological approach, the research explored how teachers adapt to students varied cultural backgrounds and learning needs. Data was collected from ten purposively selected teachers through interviews and focus group discussions, with environmental triangulation to capture different school contexts. Thematic analysis revealed three key areas: teaching strategies (differentiated instruction, cultural integration, collaborative learning), coping mechanisms (creativity, cultural sensitivity, addressing learning styles), and educational insights (traditional music, learner adaptation, teacher training). The findings underscore the importance of inclusive and culturally responsive teaching, with implications for educators and policymakers. Publication in a reputable journal is recommended to maximize the study's impact.

Keywords: *Strategies, Teaching Music, Diverse Learners, Elementary Teachers.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Effective teaching is vital for successful music education, especially in today's diverse classrooms. This study explored the strategies elementary teachers use to teach music to learners with varying cultural backgrounds, learning needs, and abilities. It addresses a key gap in research: the lack of understanding of inclusive, effective music teaching at the elementary level. Despite music's well-documented benefits, teachers often struggle with limited training and resources, making it challenging to adapt instruction to diverse classrooms. This study aims to offer practical strategies for inclusive teaching and inform teacher preparation programs and policymaking.

Globally, gaps in inclusive music education persist. In the U.S., music teaching often centers on Western classical traditions, neglecting diverse cultural expressions and lacking culturally responsive pedagogy (Abril, 2020; Joseph & Southcott, 2023). In Australia, professional development and technology integration remain limited (Smith et al., 2022). South Africa faces issues with access to instruments and trained educators, especially in rural areas (Mans, 2022).

In the Philippines, overcrowded classes, limited training, and lack of time hinder differentiated instruction. Many schools

favor Western or Manila-centric songs, sidelining regional and Indigenous music traditions (Reyes, 2021; San Jose & Muego, 2022). Even in Indigenous Cultural Communities, local music is often excluded due to lack of resources and teacher confidence (Delorino & Maala, 2021; Buenaventura, 2020). Teachers in regions like Davao and CARAGA rely on low-quality online materials due to the absence of localized resources (Manlangit, 2021). Furthermore, elementary teachers often lack specialized training in music instruction (Oracion & Nañagas, 2023).

Given these issues, this study highlights the urgent need to understand how teachers can make music education accessible and meaningful for all learners, regardless of background or ability.

B. Research Questions

This study aimed to support inclusive music education by offering practical strategies for teachers and contributing to scholarly discourse. It examined how educators adapt instruction to address learner diversity in music classrooms. The following research questions guided the investigation:

- What strategies do teachers employ in teaching music to diverse learners?
- How do teachers cope with the challenges in teaching music to diverse learners?

- What educational management insights can be drawn from the findings of the study?

C. Theoretical Lens

This study is grounded in Edwin E. Gordon's (1971) Music Learning Theory (MLT), which emphasizes audiation—the ability to mentally hear and understand music—as central to music learning. MLT outlines a developmental sequence of listening, imitation, improvisation, and finally reading and writing music, making it especially effective for diverse elementary learners. It also highlights that music aptitude can be developed through early exposure and quality instruction. By focusing on tonal and rhythmic patterns, MLT promotes adaptable and inclusive strategies, making it a key theoretical lens in exploring how Filipino teachers design music lessons for varied learners.

Complementing MLT are several interconnected theories that support inclusive and culturally responsive teaching. Geneva Gay's (2000) Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) urges educators to integrate students' cultural backgrounds into instruction, particularly relevant in the Philippines' diverse regions. Howard Gardner's (1983) Multiple Intelligences Theory promotes differentiated instruction, engaging learners through varied strengths like movement, collaboration, or composition. The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework advocates flexible, accessible methods for all learners, including those with disabilities. Additionally, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory and Constructivist Learning Theory emphasize social interaction and active, hands-on learning—both essential in music education. Together, these theories inform the study's focus on inclusive, adaptive, and meaningful strategies for teaching music in diverse classrooms.

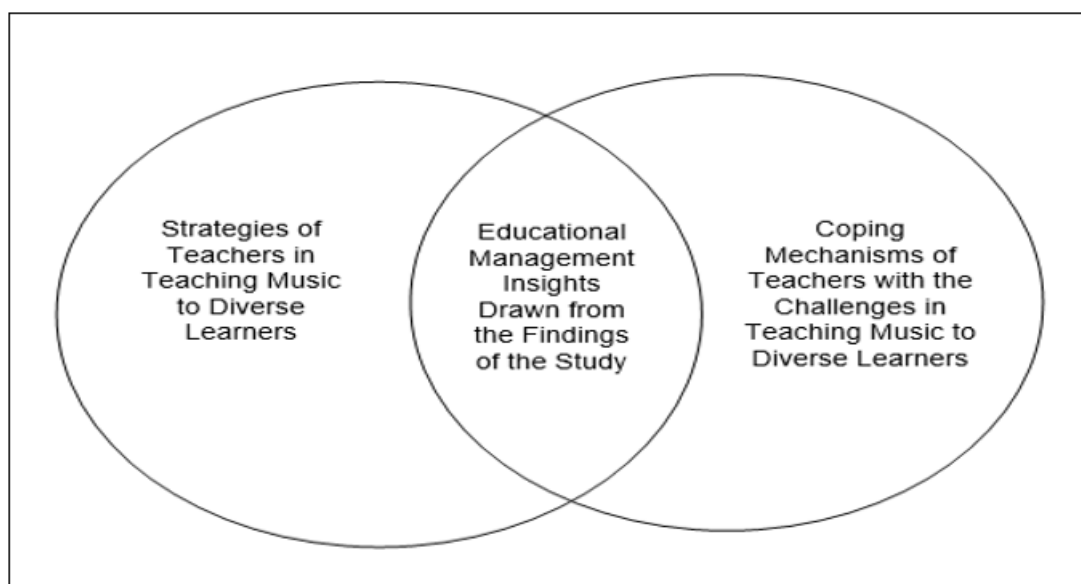


Fig 1 Conceptual Framework of the Study

II. METHODS

A. Design and Procedure

This study employed a qualitative research method using a phenomenological design, which focuses on understanding lived experiences from the participants' perspectives. Phenomenology emphasizes subjectivity, personal knowledge, and the need to "bracket" assumptions to uncover deeper insights into human experiences (Lester, 1999, as cited in Bhandari, 2020). As Qutoshi (2021) notes, phenomenological research integrates data collection and analysis to reveal how individuals perceive and interpret specific phenomena. This approach is valuable in social sciences for exploring motivations, meanings, and behaviors in context.

Data collection included in-depth interviews and structured questionnaires with open-ended questions, ideal for reaching both accessible and hard-to-reach respondents. While qualitative research favors depth over breadth, questionnaires helped gather broad insights efficiently, especially from a large number of teachers (Delve & Limpaecher, 2022). The open-ended format encouraged participants to elaborate on their experiences, providing rich, nuanced data. Through careful

coding and thematic analysis, common patterns emerged, allowing for a structured yet flexible interpretation of the diverse teaching strategies shared by music educators.

B. Research Participants

The participants of this study were the selected elementary grade teachers of Ma-a District, Division of Davao City. The participants should have the position of T1-T3, male or female, and have been teaching music three or more years, with Very Satisfactory Performance Rating for three consecutive years.

To gather diverse perspectives, the researcher conducted both in-depth interviews (IDIs) and a focus group discussion (FGD). Six (6) teachers engaged in one-on-one IDIs, allowing for the exploration of deeply personal experiences. Meanwhile, the other four (4) teachers participated in an FGD, which encouraged collaborative dialogue and collective reflection. This dual-method approach supported a richer, triangulated understanding of how teachers implement effective strategies for teaching music to diverse learners.

The researcher also used the purposive sampling design since the participants were chosen based on the criteria or

purpose of the study. It was also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling. The selection of the participants was purposefully done to ensure that the findings would be authentic.

C. Research Instrument

To ensure credibility, transferability, and dependability, this study employed audiotaped, unstructured one-on-one interviews, peer debriefing, and field notes. Each of the six participants engaged in a single interview lasting about 1 hour and 15 minutes, conducted over a four-day period. The researcher used five open-ended questions aligned with questionnaire components to gather deeper insights and validate findings. As Fuster-Guillén (2019) explains, in-depth interviews aim to uncover how participants interpret their lived experiences, while close observation and participant interaction enrich contextual understanding.

Additionally, four teachers joined a focus group discussion (FGD), allowing for dynamic exchanges and collaborative meaning-making. FGDs captured collective insights that individual interviews might miss, encouraging participants to build on one another's responses (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2023). This method helped reveal both shared and differing perspectives, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the teaching strategies and coping mechanisms used in diverse music classrooms (Krueger & Casey, 2020).

D. Data Analysis

This study utilized thematic analysis to examine qualitative data gathered from interviews, following Creswell's model of identifying themes. The researcher began by immersing in the data, reading transcripts repeatedly, and noting initial observations. Using manual coding, key phrases and ideas were labeled and grouped into categories. These codes were then analyzed to identify meaningful themes that reflected participants' lived experiences. According to Fuchs (2023), thematic analysis involves steps such as familiarization, coding, theme development, review, definition, and final reporting, each of which was carefully followed to ensure depth and rigor.

To enhance credibility and reliability, data were organized and coded systematically, following the framework analysis approach. Recurring words and ideas were grouped into overarching themes that provided deeper insight into the data. The validity of findings was strengthened by cross-checking multiple sources and using both interviews and field notes. Finally, the researcher synthesized narratives and themes into a cohesive written report and visual presentation, highlighting the strategies teachers used in inclusive music education. As Goldsmith (2021) emphasizes, framework analysis requires methodical and reflective work, which was applied throughout the data analysis process in this study.

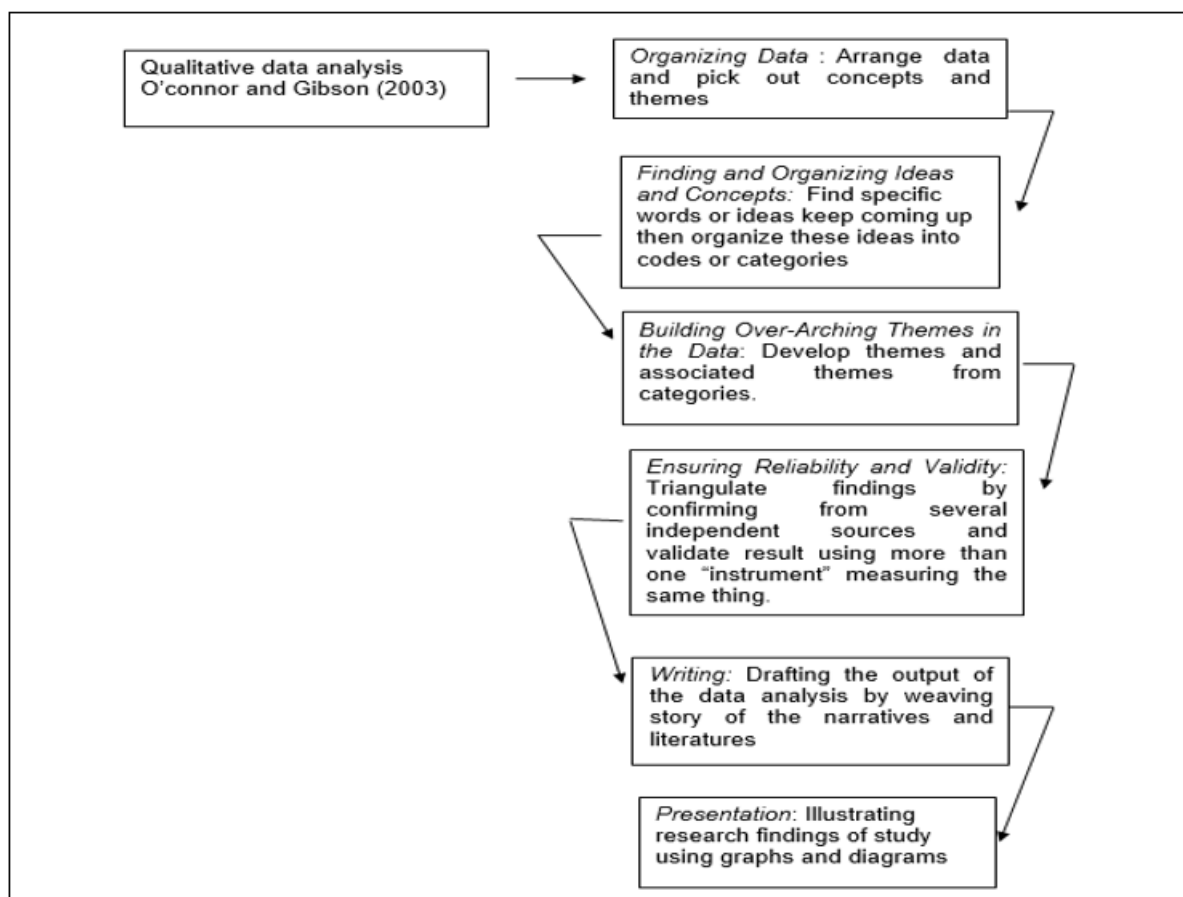


Fig 2 Analytical Framework of the Study

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Strategies of Teachers in Teaching Music to Diverse Learners

➤ Differentiated Instruction

The participants describe that teachers tailor lessons to accommodate different learning styles, such as auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learners. They might use visual aids, hands-on instruments, or listening activities to engage students. Collaborative learning in teaching music involves students working together in ensembles, group projects, and peer teaching to achieve shared musical goals. It fosters teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills, whether through ensemble playing, jam sessions, or technology integration. Differentiated instruction can make it easier for students with a range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds to access and engage in music education (Kancheli and Tchokhonelidze, 2023).

The participants shared:

“To teach music effectively to diverse learners, I use differentiated instruction. This means tailoring my teaching methods and materials to suit the varied learning styles, abilities, and backgrounds of my students. For example, I might provide visual aids for visual learners, hands-on activities for kinesthetic learners, and auditory examples for auditory learners.” (P2)

“Incorporating technology has been effective in teaching music to diverse learners. Using apps, software, and online resources allows students to explore music from various cultures and time periods, making the learning experience more interactive and immersive.” (P4)

“Building strong relationships with my diverse learners is foundational. When students feel a personal connection with their teacher, they are more likely to engage in the learning process and feel comfortable exploring different musical genres and styles.” (P9)

Participant 2 emphasized that differentiated instruction is essential for teaching music to diverse learners, as it tailors methods to individual needs—using visual aids for visual learners, hands-on tasks for kinesthetic learners, and audio resources for auditory learners. Participant 4 added that integrating technology, such as music apps and digital tools, enhances engagement by allowing students to explore diverse musical cultures and styles, catering to varied learning preferences. Meanwhile, Participant 9 stressed the importance of building strong student-teacher relationships, which fosters a supportive environment where learners feel safe to participate and explore music freely.

These insights align with existing research. Desinguraj and Ebenezer (2021) noted that differentiated instruction acknowledges learners' unique needs and promotes engagement through personalized strategies. Ira et al. (2022) and Alice-Anne (2023) further support the idea that adapting curricula fosters inclusivity. Additionally, Shrabanti (2021) highlighted that differentiated instruction not only enhances

student achievement but also strengthens relationships, motivation, and collaboration in music classrooms.

➤ Integration of Culture to Music

The integration of culture into music teaching involves incorporating diverse cultural perspectives, traditions, and musical styles into the curriculum. This approach helps students develop a broader understanding and appreciation of music's cultural significance. By exploring music from various cultures, students can gain a deeper connection to the world around them through the universal language of music. Lastly, integrating the intercultural dimension in language teaching through the exploration of cultural meanings in music enhances students' understanding of other cultures, promotes intercultural communication, and enhances their pedagogic experiences as stated by Fernández-Benavides and Castillo-Palacios, (2023).

The following quotes were taken from the participants:

“One effective strategy I employ is incorporating a wide range of multicultural music into the curriculum. This not only exposes diverse learners to different cultures but also makes the learning experience more engaging and relatable for them.” (P1)

“As a teacher, I engage in continuous cultural competence training to better understand and respect the diverse backgrounds of my students. This helps me create a more inclusive and respectful learning environment where all students feel valued.” (P7)

“Adapting music materials to be culturally relevant is essential. This means selecting songs and pieces that resonate with the diverse backgrounds of my students, allowing them to see themselves represented in the music they learn.” (P8)

Participant 1 emphasized that integrating multicultural music into the curriculum engages diverse learners by making lessons more relatable and enriching their understanding of global cultures. Participant 7 added that continuous cultural competence training enables teachers to respect and connect with students' backgrounds, fostering an inclusive and respectful classroom environment. Similarly, Participant 8 highlighted the value of selecting culturally relevant music materials to help students feel represented and more engaged in their learning.

These insights align with existing research. Kyakuwa (2020) found that integrating culture in music teaching exposes students to diverse musical traditions and promotes cultural appreciation. Haynes (2021) noted that culturally responsive teaching connects students' backgrounds with classroom content, offering more personalized and meaningful instruction. Bai (2022) further emphasized that incorporating local music traditions enhances professionalism and depth in music education.

➤ Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning in teaching music involves students working together in ensembles, group projects, and peer teaching to achieve shared musical goals. It fosters

teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills, whether through ensemble playing, jam sessions, or technology integration. This approach not only enhances musical abilities but also develops important life skills in students. According to a study by (Siw et al., 2020), peer collaboration enhances students' motivation, self-efficacy, and sense of belonging in higher music education.

Four participants voiced that:

“Creating inclusive environments in the music classroom is crucial. This involves fostering a sense of belonging for all students, regardless of their backgrounds. I make sure to celebrate diversity through music, allowing students to share their own cultural music and traditions with the class.” (P3)

“I often employ collaborative learning strategies where students work together in groups. This encourages peer-to-peer learning, promotes teamwork, and allows students from diverse backgrounds to learn from each other's experiences with music.” (P5)

“Giving students choices in their music education journey empowers them and caters to their individual interests. Whether it's choosing a musical instrument to learn or selecting a genre to focus on, providing options fosters engagement and ownership of learning.” (P6)

“I encourage self-expression through music. This means giving students opportunities to create their own music, whether through songwriting, composing, or improvisation. Allowing for personal expression fosters creativity and confidence in diverse learners.” (P10)

Participants highlighted three key strategies in making music education more inclusive: differentiated instruction, cultural integration, and collaborative learning. Participant 3 emphasized celebrating diversity by allowing students to share their cultural music, while Participant 5 and Participant 6 encouraged collaboration and student choice to enhance engagement. Participant 10 promoted self-expression through creative music-making. These findings align with studies (Li, 2022; Jon & Katie, 2021; Melissa, 2020; Gabriela, 2020) that show how collaborative and inclusive approaches improve performance, creativity, and social skills in music education.

From these insights, three major themes emerged: adapting teaching to varied learning styles, integrating multicultural content, and promoting peer collaboration. These approaches help students feel represented, respected, and engaged, fostering a supportive environment where all learners can thrive musically and culturally.

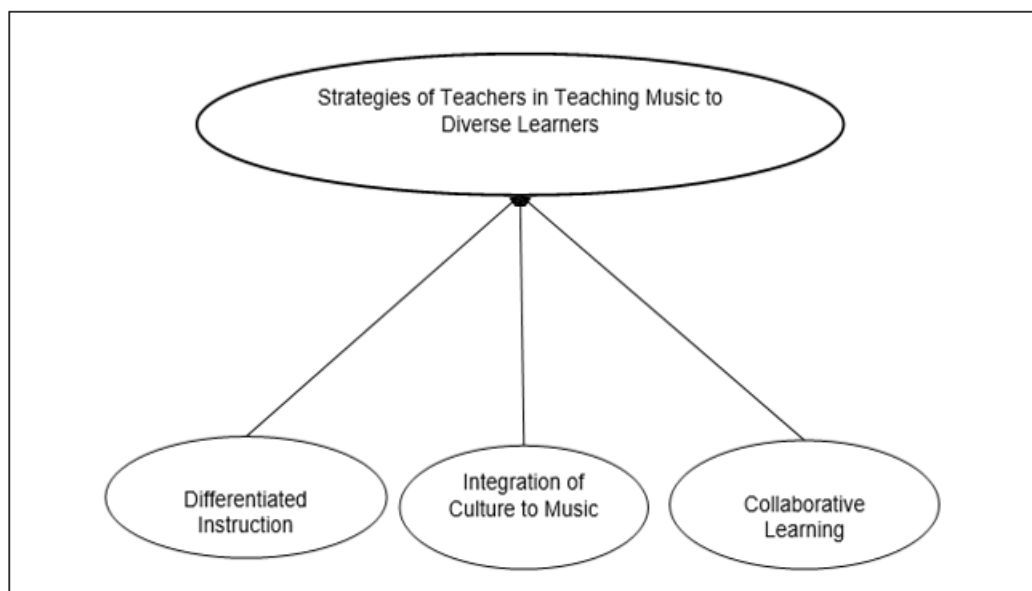


Fig 3 Strategies of Teachers in Teaching Music to Diverse Learners.

B. Coping Mechanism of Teachers with the Challenges in Teaching Music to Diverse Learners

➤ Being Creative and Resourceful

In teaching music can include a shortage of musical instruments for students, restricted access to a variety of sheet music and scores, and a lack of technology such as computers and software for music education. These constraints can impact the breadth and depth of musical experiences students can have in the classroom, requiring educators to be creative and resourceful in their teaching approaches.

Some participants revealed:

“Coping with limited resources is a common challenge. To overcome this, I seek out community partnerships, apply for grants, and repurpose everyday items as musical instruments to ensure all students have access to a rich music education.” (P2)

“Some students may have had limited exposure to music before entering my class. I cope with this challenge by starting with foundational concepts, gradually building knowledge, and providing extra support for students who need it.” (P5)

“Socioeconomic disparities can impact access to musical instruments and resources. I address this challenge by working with school administration to provide loaner instruments, seek donations, and offer scholarships for music programs.” (P7)

Furthermore, Participant 2 discussed the challenge of coping with limited resources by creatively seeking solutions such as building community partnerships, applying for grants, and repurposing everyday items as instruments. This proactive approach ensures that students, regardless of financial limitations, can still experience a comprehensive music education. In line with this, Participant 5 noted that some students have had little prior exposure to music. To address this gap, they focus on teaching foundational music concepts and offering additional support to help these students gradually build their knowledge and confidence in the classroom.

Similarly, Participant 7 emphasized how socioeconomic disparities can hinder access to musical instruments. To overcome this barrier, they collaborate with school administrators to provide loaner instruments, secure donations, and create scholarship opportunities—ensuring that all students, regardless of their financial background, have equal access to music programs.

The foregoing results of the study align with the findings of Renee (2021), who identified insufficient supplies, limited funding, and lack of access to facilities and technology as common barriers in music education. These challenges are particularly evident in low-resource communities, where music education is often not prioritized.

Angela and Laia (2022) similarly emphasized that delivering quality music programs in such contexts requires educators to develop innovative and cost-effective solutions. Moreover, the lack of teacher preparation can present additional obstacles, especially when working with students from marginalized groups, such as those with visual impairments. Despite these limitations, music educators continue to adapt and make efficient use of the minimal resources available to them. In general, limited resources in music education can affect the availability of materials, technology, and funding, thereby requiring educators to be resourceful and strong advocates for the value and accessibility of music education.

➤ *Fostering Culture-Sensitive Approaches*

In teaching music encompasses varying learning styles, attention spans, motivation levels, social dynamics, response to feedback, and levels of expressiveness among students. Educators must adapt their teaching approaches to accommodate these differences, whether through diverse instructional methods, individualized feedback, or fostering a supportive and inclusive classroom environment. Understanding and addressing these variations can enhance student engagement and learning outcomes in music education. A study on self-regulation behaviors of undergraduate music students revealed that students used strategies such as recording audios, self-evaluation, and note-taking to manage their practice time effectively (Rebecca, 2021). These findings highlight the importance of considering individual teaching

styles, communication patterns, and self-regulation strategies in music education.

These are supported by the following responses:

“Teaching music from various cultures requires cultural sensitivity. I address this challenge by educating myself on different cultural practices, consulting with cultural experts, and approaching each culture’s music with respect and understanding.” (P3)

“Coping with behavioral differences among diverse learners is crucial. I employ positive behavior management strategies, establish clear expectations, and create a safe and supportive classroom environment where all students feel respected.” (P6)

Participant 3 addressed the challenge of teaching music from various cultures by emphasizing cultural sensitivity. They make a conscious effort to educate themselves on diverse cultural practices, consult cultural experts, and present each culture’s music with respect and understanding. This approach fosters an inclusive learning environment that values diversity. Similarly, Participant 6 tackled behavioral differences among learners by implementing positive behavior management strategies. By setting clear expectations and creating a safe, supportive classroom atmosphere, they ensure that all students feel respected and are able to participate fully in music learning.

These findings align with the studies of Ersin (2022) and Madsen (2022). Ersin found that teachers adapt their instructional techniques based on the behavioral dynamics of students, with band and orchestra teachers using varied approaches such as modeling, verbal instruction, and question-and-answer strategies. Madsen’s study further supports the importance of managing interpersonal interactions in music education, noting the prevalence of both verbal and non-verbal behaviors that influence classroom dynamics. These insights emphasize the need for adaptive teaching methods that consider both cultural and behavioral diversity in music education.

➤ *Catering Diverse Learning Styles*

Teaching music refers to the varied ways in which students best absorb and understand musical concepts. These styles include auditory (learning through listening), visual (learning through seeing), and kinesthetic (learning through doing) approaches. Music educators must cater to these diverse styles by incorporating a mix of listening activities, visual aids like sheet music or demonstrations, and hands-on practice to ensure comprehensive learning for all students. Embracing a variety of methods and approaches in music education can lead to culturally appropriate teaching and a better understanding of the diversity of music education (Georgina and Stewart, 2021).

The participants revealed:

“One challenge I’ve encountered is language barriers, especially with students from non-English speaking backgrounds. To address this, I provide translated materials, use visuals, and rely on universal musical symbols to convey concepts.” (P1)

“Every student has a unique learning style. To cope with this challenge, I implement a variety of teaching methods such as visual aids, hands-on activities, listening exercises, and group projects to cater to different learning preferences.” (P4)

“Engaging parents from diverse backgrounds can be challenging due to language and cultural differences. I cope with this by providing translated materials, hosting multicultural events, and inviting parents to participate in their child’s musical journey.” (P8)

“Selecting repertoire that is inclusive of diverse cultures can be challenging. I cope with this by researching and curating a diverse collection of music from around the world, ensuring that all students see themselves represented in the curriculum.” (P9)

Participant 1 addressed the challenge of language barriers by providing translated materials, using visuals, and relying on universal musical symbols, enabling students from non-English-speaking backgrounds to better understand musical concepts. Similarly, Participant 4 acknowledged the importance of catering to individual learning styles by using a variety of teaching methods, including visual aids, hands-on activities, listening exercises, and group projects. Participant 8 tackled the challenge of engaging parents from diverse backgrounds by offering translated materials, organizing multicultural events, and encouraging active parental participation in their child’s education. Meanwhile, Participant 9 responded to the difficulty of selecting an inclusive musical repertoire by researching and curating music from various cultures, ensuring representation and relevance for all students.

Lastly, Participant 10 managed time constraints by prioritizing essential concepts, integrating music into other

subjects, and efficiently structuring classroom activities to maximize learning despite a demanding schedule.

These findings align with Green (2023), who emphasized that addressing diverse learning styles in music instruction brings multiple benefits. Learning skills and repertoire across genres—such as harmonizing by ear or improvising—fosters creativity and personal expression, encouraging lifelong musical engagement. Alamat (2022) added that understanding the global diversity of music and its compositional uses enhances students’ flexibility and resourcefulness in music-making. John (2022) further noted that recognizing diverse modes of communication in music instruction improves teaching effectiveness, especially for students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Based on Figure 4, three key themes emerged from the participants’ responses: being creative and resourceful, fostering a culture-sensitive environment, and catering to diverse learning styles. Teachers reported adapting to limited resources by using everyday items as instruments, forming community partnerships, or applying for grants. To support inclusive classrooms, educators implemented positive behavior strategies and fostered respectful, supportive environments. In accommodating varied learning preferences, they employed differentiated instruction tailored to auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learners. These themes underscore the adaptability, creativity, and commitment educators must possess to effectively teach music in diverse educational settings.

“Coping with time constraints in a packed curriculum requires strategic planning. I prioritize essential music concepts, integrate music into other subjects when possible, and make efficient use of class time through structured activities.” (P10)

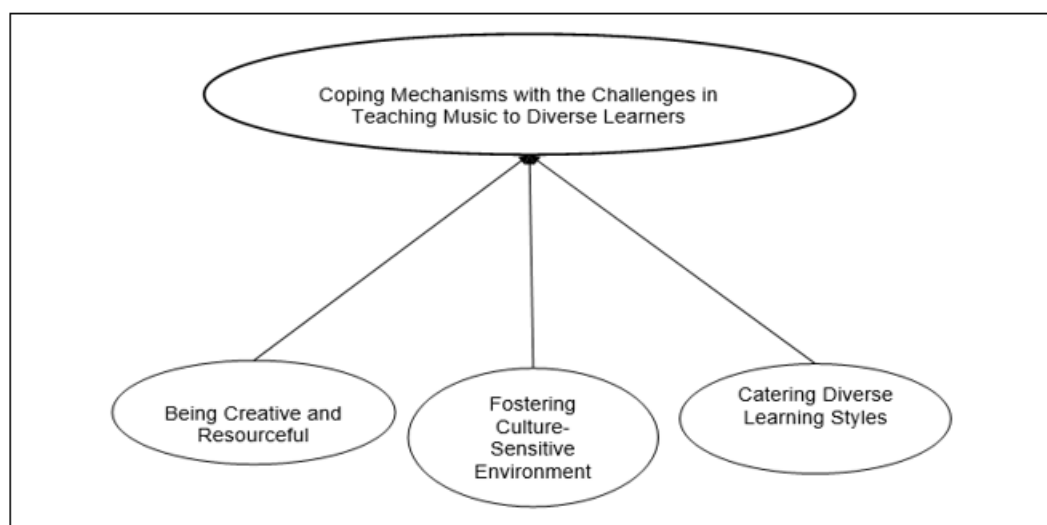


Fig 4 Coping Mechanisms with the Challenges in Teaching Music to Diverse Learners

C. Educational Management Insights Drawn from the Findings of the Study

➤ Incorporate Traditional Music

In teaching music involves incorporating diverse musical traditions and genres into the curriculum, respecting and acknowledging the musical practices of students’ cultural

backgrounds. Teachers should avoid stereotypes, invite guest artists from various backgrounds, and provide translations and explanations of lyrics when teaching songs from other languages. This approach fosters an inclusive and enriching learning environment that celebrates the diverse musical heritage of students. Culturally, sensitive teaching methods enable students to gain a deeper understanding of multicultural

diversity, expanding their knowledge and appreciation of different cultures. Moreover, it allows music educators to select music that is representative of various cultures, making it more meaningful and relevant to students in American classrooms (Georgina, 2021).

The participants shared:

“Building partnerships with community organizations, cultural institutions, and fellow educators can enrich music education for diverse learners. Schools should encourage collaboration to broaden students’ musical experiences beyond the classroom.” (P3)

“Insights from this study suggest the need for curriculum design that is inclusive of diverse musical traditions and cultures. Educational management should prioritize the development of curricula that reflect the backgrounds and experiences of all students.” (P5)

“Educational management should prioritize equitable access to music education for all students. This includes addressing barriers such as socioeconomic disparities, language barriers, and disabilities to ensure that every student has the opportunity to participate and excel in music.” (P8)

Participants highlighted key strategies for promoting inclusivity in music education. P3 emphasized forming partnerships with community organizations, cultural institutions, and fellow educators to expand students' exposure to diverse musical experiences. P5 advocated for designing curricula that reflect a wide range of musical traditions and student backgrounds, ensuring all learners feel represented and engaged. Educational leaders were urged to support such inclusive practices to enrich learning environments.

P8 stressed the need for equitable access to music education by addressing barriers like socioeconomic status, language differences, and disabilities. This aligns with Haynes (2022), who found that culturally sensitive teaching fosters belonging and positive self-identity. Moreover, it promotes empathy and respect among students, creating more inclusive and understanding classrooms (Youngsoon & Seungeun, 2023).

➤ *Adapt to the Diverse Needs and Abilities of Learners*

Flexibility in teaching music is crucial for adapting to the diverse needs and abilities of students. It allows educators to modify lesson plans on-the-fly, tailoring activities to students' learning styles, interests, and progress. This adaptability fosters a more engaging and effective learning experience, catering to the individual needs of each student and maximizing their musical development. The findings of the study agree with the findings of Zhang, (2023), distributing the burden on working memory and organizing perception, flexible learning environments can support the organization of students' task completion processes.

Participants revealed:

“One key insight is the importance of flexibility in music education. Teachers should be ready to adapt their teaching

methods and materials to meet the diverse needs of students, fostering a more inclusive and effective learning environment.” (P1)

“Educational management should advocate for resources and funding to support diverse music programs. This includes access to instruments, technology, cultural materials, and professional development opportunities for teachers.” (P4)

“Schools should actively engage parents and the community in music education initiatives. This could involve workshops, concerts, cultural celebrations, and opportunities for parents to participate in their child’s musical learning journey.” (P6)

“Using data to track student progress and engagement in music programs can inform educational management decisions. Schools should collect data on student outcomes, participation rates, and feedback to continuously improve music education for diverse learners.” (P7)

“Educational management should promote the integration of music with other core subjects. This interdisciplinary approach not only enhances learning but also reinforces the importance of music as a fundamental aspect of a well-rounded education.” (P10)

P1 emphasized the need for flexibility in music education, encouraging teachers to adjust methods and materials to accommodate diverse student needs. P4 called on educational leaders to provide resources and funding for inclusive music programs, including instruments, technology, cultural materials, and teacher training. P6 highlighted the role of parent and community engagement through activities like workshops and concerts, while P7 suggested using data on student progress and participation to improve program effectiveness. Meanwhile, P10 supported integrating music with core subjects to promote interdisciplinary learning and reinforce music's value in a well-rounded education.

These insights are supported by studies showing the benefits of flexible teaching approaches in music. According to Miriam and Kathrin (2021), flexibility allows educators to adapt classrooms for different activities and instructional goals. Rhoda (2022) echoed this, highlighting the pedagogical freedom it provides. Watanabe (2023) further noted that flexible learning environments empower students to tailor their surroundings to their needs, enhancing engagement and ownership of learning.

➤ *Enhanced Music Training for Teachers*

In teaching music involves educators continually enhancing their skills and knowledge through workshops, courses, and collaboration with peers. It includes attending conferences, joining music education associations, and engaging in self-study to stay updated with best practices and advancements in music education. This ongoing learning and growth enable music teachers to provide high-quality instruction and enriching musical experiences for their students. Classroom teachers the tools they need to create lesson plans that are tailored to the needs of their particular classrooms and incorporate music into cross-curricular

activities as mentioned by Maria et al., (2022). All things considered, music teachers' professional development fosters professional self-development and readiness while also strengthening collaboration and instructional skills.

The participants said:

“Continuous professional development in cultural competence and inclusive teaching practices is essential for educators. Schools and districts should invest in training programs to equip teachers with the necessary skills to teach music to diverse learners effectively.” (P2)

“Recognizing and supporting teachers who excel in teaching music to diverse learners is vital. This could involve awards, professional development opportunities, and mentorship programs to foster a community of excellence in music education.” (P9)

P2 emphasized the importance of continuous professional development in cultural competence and inclusive teaching practices, urging investment in training programs that prepare educators to effectively teach diverse learners. Similarly, P9 advocated for recognizing and supporting teachers who excel in this area through awards, mentorships, and growth

opportunities. These views align with Brian's (2022) study, which highlights how professional development fosters collaboration, reflection, and the exchange of strategies among music educators. Grecia and Mike (2022) added that such training ensures educators are equipped to deliver quality instruction, while Teng (2020) noted that it contributes to a more engaging and effective learning environment. Tetiana and Natalia (2021) also emphasized that professional development strengthens competence and creative potential, shaping music teachers' readiness for ongoing self-improvement.

As reflected in Figure 5, three main themes emerged from the participants' responses: incorporating traditional music, adapting to learners' diverse needs and abilities, and enhancing teacher training. Teachers stressed the value of integrating traditional and cultural music into the curriculum to reflect and respect students' backgrounds, making lessons more engaging and inclusive. They also highlighted the need for flexible teaching methods and materials to accommodate different learning styles and abilities. Lastly, continuous training in inclusive strategies was viewed as essential, with teachers urging schools to provide ongoing support to keep educators prepared for the evolving demands of diverse music classrooms.

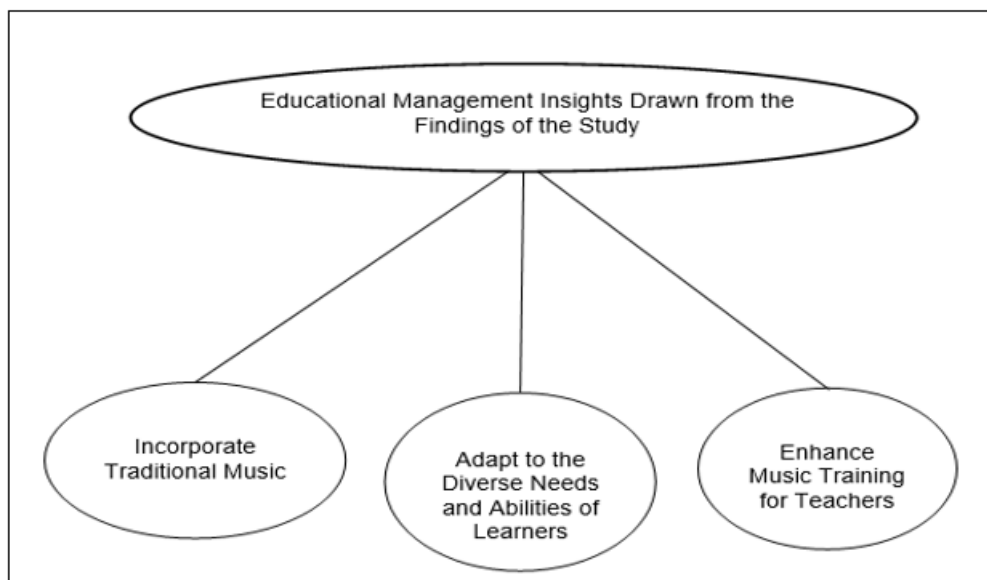


Fig 5 Educational Management Insights Drawn from the Findings of the Study

IV. IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

A. Implications

The study revealed that elementary teachers use varied strategies to teach music to diverse learners, emphasizing the importance of flexibility, cultural sensitivity, and support in music education. Three key strategies emerged: differentiated instruction, cultural integration, and collaborative learning. Differentiated instruction allows teachers to meet different learning styles using visual aids, hands-on activities, and auditory examples. Cultural integration involves using multicultural songs and materials, helping students connect with their heritage and appreciate others. Collaborative learning encourages teamwork and sharing of musical knowledge among students, creating an inclusive environment.

In coping with challenges, teachers displayed creativity and resourcefulness, nurtured a culture-sensitive environment, and catered to various learning styles. They often repurpose everyday objects as instruments, seek community support, and apply for grants to secure resources. They also promote inclusivity by maintaining respectful, safe classroom environments and applying behavior management strategies. To address diverse learning preferences, teachers adjust instruction using tools like visual aids, movement-based activities, and auditory examples, ensuring all students are engaged in the music curriculum.

From a management perspective, teachers suggested incorporating traditional music, adapting to diverse student needs, and enhancing teacher training. Including traditional

music fosters inclusivity and cultural awareness. Flexibility in teaching methods ensures that all students' abilities and learning styles are addressed. Teachers also emphasized the need for ongoing professional development focused on inclusive practices. These findings align with educational theories such as Gordon's Music Learning Theory, Gay's Culturally Responsive Teaching, Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, Universal Design for Learning, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, and Constructivist Learning Theory, all reinforcing the call for inclusive and adaptive approaches in music education.

B. Future Directions

To foster a more inclusive and effective music education landscape, learners, teachers, parents, school administrators, and policymakers must work collaboratively. Learners should be encouraged to explore and share their own cultural musical backgrounds as well as those of their peers, promoting pride in identity and expanding musical perspectives. Active participation in class discussions, asking questions, and engaging in community music opportunities can empower students in their musical journey. Teachers, on the other hand, must continuously adapt their methods to accommodate varied learning styles and backgrounds, regularly assessing student needs and collaborating with colleagues to design interdisciplinary projects that link music with other subjects. Parents can enhance their children's musical experiences by attending school events, fostering music exploration at home, and advocating for stronger support for music programs, including organizing community events that highlight student talent.

School administrators should support inclusive practices by offering professional development focused on culturally responsive and differentiated instruction while encouraging collaboration among educators to share effective strategies. Building partnerships with local cultural institutions can also enrich students' musical exposure. Policymakers play a crucial role by ensuring curricula reflect diverse musical traditions, maintaining equitable funding for resources, and addressing disparities among schools. They must develop and enforce policies that support inclusive music education, especially in underfunded communities. Lastly, researchers should continue to explore and document best practices in teaching music to diverse learners, highlighting successful models that incorporate cultural sensitivity, flexibility, and inclusiveness in music education.

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