

Music education and cultural and national values

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine music teachers' perceptions of teaching cultural and national values (also defined as national cultural values) to explore the tensions facing school music education in the choice of music types to be delivered in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Design/methodology/approach – With specific regard to music teachers' perceptions of “values,” “music cultures,” and “nationalism,” data were drawn from a survey questionnaire given to 343 music teachers (155 pre-service and 188 in-service music teachers) and semi-structured interviews with 36 of the surveyed respondents.

Findings – The findings of the study showed that though many respondents in Hong Kong and Taiwan felt comfortable teaching traditional Chinese music, they did not want to teach contemporary Mainland Chinese music and other political or patriotic forms in the school music curriculum. The data also demonstrated some shortcomings in introducing a balance of music types into the curriculum, as well as limitations in promoting national education in response to the respective sociopolitical situations in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Research limitations – This study was subject to limitations regarding the potential generalizability of the findings on school music teachers' perceptions in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Practical implications – The implications for teachers and student teachers regarding the development of cultural and national values related to the political processes in Hong Kong and Taiwan are complicated, not only because of their relationship with Mainland China and its education based on nationalism but also the extent of teachers' professional training to help create an enabling environment for national and cultural development.

Originality/values – The findings of this study revealed that there are fundamental gaps in the overt and operational curricula in Hong Kong and Taiwan concerning the sociopolitical function of values in school music education in response to their respective sociopolitical situations.

Keywords school music education, cultural and national values, music teachers, Hong Kong, Taiwan.

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Schooling is the recognition of legitimate knowledge and know-how based on a curriculum, which may include certain cultural and national values such as language, ethnic and racial identity, and cultural history and traditions that are regarded as shared beliefs of what is good, absolute, and desirable in a society. An important aspect of culture is that it composes shared knowledge, beliefs, values, and goals that guide human activity (Hofstede, 2001). Culture is often described “as the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes one group of people from another” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 40). The concept of national culture in the work of Hofstede (1980, 1983) is not purely of culture as an indifferent type of mental programming but also as territorially distinct (also see Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005).

Culture and education are complex phenomena, and the problematic relationship between school knowledge and control generally raises the question of how school knowledge and culture can be managed, delivered, and taught. With an emphasis on national development and duties over rights, national cultural values in education is entirely in line with the interests of the nation-state. The transformation of culture is necessary to “uphold and sanction a society’s belief, rules, and its use of power” in response to societal changes (Smith, 1973, p. 37). Aronowitz and Giroux (1993, p. 76) claimed that “schools play a particularly important role in legitimating certain forms of knowledge,” and the dominant cultural capital is legitimized through the selection of given beliefs and skills. Education is considered an orderly endeavor through both official and school activities led by the teaching profession to inculcate learners through formal and informal curricula. Michael Apple’s (1990, 2019) attention to what he marked “official knowledge” has profoundly altered how we see the process of curriculum selection and organization. Within this framework, knowledge is not scrutinized; alternatively, it is a mediation of the material elements in social life (Foucault, 1980), and the dominant forms of school curricula attest the dominant ideology in society (Apple, 2000; Giroux, 1981, 1985). School education, in the form of the curriculum, is an indicator of the power of a nation and is the major source of the preservation of national and cultural values (Ball, 1990).

Teaching is both an art and a social process involving the teacher as the key component in cultural transmission. By any definition, teachers are knowledge workers in the school systems of modern societies. Giroux (1981) elaborated on the philosophical foundations of the theory and practice of education that are not only critical to established institutions and practices but also capable of transforming those institutions and practices, with the ultimate goal of transforming society itself. The agents of school organizations, such as teachers, are encouraged to exercise their own reflections, and music teachers may be seen as agents “working as part of dynamic and organic cultural traditions” (Westerlund, Karlsen, and Partti, 2020, p. 4). As agents of change, music teachers are viewed as critical cultural workers (Freire, 1998) tasked with instilling in future teachers the essential consciousness and empowerment to critically understand and alter their cultural conditions as needed. Similarly, this is also what Giroux (1992) quickly referred to as the notion of both artists and teachers as “cultural workers,” banded in a common purpose. This can be seen in the development of forms of education where “cultural consciousness” (Jabbar and Mirza, 2017, p. 35) benefits a significant role among both teachers and students. Every music teacher is regarded as “a value educator” in “his/her pedagogical decisions” in response to the “social and cultural meanings” of a particular music curriculum (Froehlich and Smith, 2017, p. 6). Along with the ideas of the American pragmatist John Dewey, Woodford (2005, p. xi) has suggested that helping music educators to recognize their role as agents in the transformation of society opens their contribution “to wider intellectual and political conversations about the nature and significance of music in our lives and those of our children” and advances democratic ends. Teachers deliver different degrees of cultural capital in school classrooms (Ballantine, Spade, and Stuber, 2015). For example,

when a teacher chooses to teach or to perform a national anthem or a traditional folk song, s/he is attempting to expose students to “society’s values and heritage” and his/her “reflections of those values and heritage” (Kelly, 2002, p. 43).

Context of the study

The two societies of Hong Kong (HK) and Taiwan (TW) share many similarities, as they both have histories of colonialism, a predominately Chinese population, and have experienced the world’s dynamic economic growth in the last few decades. Basically, HK and TW have similar population structures, as most people are Chinese (HK has 92% and TW has 97.8%) and they share the same written language. Chinese culture plays an important role in both societies, drawing, in particular, on Confucian values concerning the cultivation of virtue and harmonious relationships. To some extent, they have differed in their political developments. Hong Kong was a British colony between 1842 and 1997, and then its sovereignty was returned to Mainland China on July 1, 1997. Taiwan experienced Japanese colonial domination between 1895 and 1945, and became the refuge of Chinese nationalists fleeing Mainland China after the victory of the Communist Party of China in 1949; it is now a democracy marked by a multiparty system, with a universal direct election of the president and vice president. Despite the economic and political development of Taiwan over the past 60 years, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) continues to regard the region as a province, and the Taiwan Government has been warned that the PRC will not rule out military means to force the unification of Taiwan with China.

Music education in HK and TW promotes national identity and national culture through the use of traditional Chinese music and Taiwanese music, respectively. In patriotic education, national sentiment refers to emotional attachment, while national consciousness is derived from shared traditions, values, and cultures of the past. HK and TW have different relationships with the PRC, which can be seen in the contrasting policies imposed in their respective national education: Hong Kong has attempted to get closer to Mainland China, while Taiwan continues to shift away from “mainlandization” (see Law, 2004, p. 263; also see Hughes and Stone, 1999; Morris and Vickers, 2015). The singing of the PRC’s national anthem and the introduction of traditional Chinese music are two signs of how nationalization has begun to emerge in various degrees in Hong Kong’s school music education (see Curriculum Development Council, 2003). The terms “education in patriotism” and “patriotism in music education” are both important in teacher education in Taiwan (Lee, 2014, p. 127). The inclusion of patriotic songs in the Taiwanese school curriculum has become very popular in terms of the political and historical contexts of Taiwan, particularly 1949 and 1987 (Lee, 2014).

Over time, more and more HK and TW people have identified themselves as Hong Kongers and Taiwanese instead of Chinese or as Chinese Hong Kongers and Chinese and Taiwanese, respectively. The respective local Hong Kong and Taiwanese identities have emerged, transformed, and have been reconstructed. On the one hand, various curriculum guides in HK have recommended that students study Chinese history and culture (e.g., see Curriculum Development Council, 2017a, 2017b), while the concept of the “Chinese nation” has been undermined in TW’s school education, particularly in the Taiwanese history subject. Taiwan’s Ministry of Education has struggled in settling on the proportion of teaching classical Chinese and modern written Chinese (see Teng, 2017), as well as Chinese history and Taiwanese history, in the school curriculum (see Hung, 2018). Despite the incorporation of traditional Chinese music and other world music into the school curriculum, music education in TW has also paid more attention to the Taiwanese-focused narrative in line with the shifting cross-strait relationship between Taiwan and Mainland China (Ho, 2019). However, listening activities and learning music elements have long been based on Western classical music

learning using an Anglo-centric approach in both HK's and TW's school music education (Ho, 2013)

In 2014, large protest movements erupted: the Umbrella Movement in HK, which denounced the Special Administration Region's electoral system and called for universal suffrage; and the Sunflower Movement in TW, which opposed trade liberalization with the Mainland. The two movements unveiled that many HK and TW people (particularly among the post-1980s and post-1990s generations of both societies) were in direct opposition to identifying as Chinese, which the PRC Government has promoted and employed in an attempt to tie Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Macau to Mainland China (see Kaeding, 2015). Nonetheless, HK and TW have different perspectives on education for national identity in their respective education reforms. The recent National Anthem Bill in HK requires schools to teach students how to sing the tune with proper decorum, as well as to educate students on the history and spirit of the anthem, in both primary and secondary education. However, in TW, primary and secondary schools are encouraged to play or to sing the national anthem only at important school events, such as Sports Day, and they can decide whether to sing or to play the anthem lyrics selectively. Official nationalism in Taiwan has decreased rapidly (e.g., see Ministry of Education, 2008, 2018), while songs composed by Taiwanese composers, Taiwanese folk songs, and local popular songs are included in the music curriculum (Ho, 2019; Ishii, 2018).

Although comparative literature on music teaching can be found in Chinese societies (e.g., see Ho, 2011; Law and Ho, 2006), none of these studies have addressed music teachers' views on the development of cultural and national values in school music education. In 2004, data drawn from a questionnaire given to more than 5,000 students and from interviews conducted with 46 music teachers in Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Taipei revealed that school music education was focused on Western classical music and was increasingly being challenged by the emergence of traditional Chinese and Chinese local music and wider sociopolitical movements (Ho, 2011). Drawn from a sample of Hong Kong and Taiwanese secondary school students, Law and Ho (2006) asserted that music education in Hong Kong and Taiwan also faced challenges related to cultural globalization (i.e., the introduction of other world music cultures, such as African and Indian music). To fill this research gap in the literature, the current study intended to provide an insight into this particular development and to explore the musical and educational dimensions that are affecting HK and TW (also known as the Republic of China) by examining music teachers' perspectives on the nature and extent of the cultural and national contents of school music education. This study attempted to offer illustrations of the challenges to teachers' real-life practices and their perceptions of national and cultural education in school music education.

The research study

Aim and research question

In the light of recent developments in HK and TW, this study examined music teachers' (including pre-service and in-service music teachers)¹ views on cultural and national values in school music education, with a particular focus on the introduction of diverse music types and Chinese patriotic songs, to explore the dynamics and complexity of the relationship between the state and nationalism. Nationalism is an important social and political phenomenon that involves forming HK and TW into a definable identity through participation in singing and listening to their respective national anthems² and by incorporating traditional Chinese music and folk music into school music education. The main question of how music teachers respond to various music styles and music practices in response to cultural and national paradigms in the curriculum in accordance with their evolving sociopolitical contexts was the theme of this study. Various music styles in this study included the transmission of Western classical music, Chinese classical music, local folk and classical music, and popular music, while music

practices involved the classroom music activities of music listening, creating/improvisation/composing, and performing (see Curriculum Development Council, 2003; Ministry of Education, 2018).

Methodology

This study adopted two major research methods: a survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The study was approved by the institutional committee on the Use of Human and Animal Subjects in Teaching and Research. The survey questionnaires were administered from Autumn 2017 to Autumn 2018, while the interviews were carried out from Summer 2018 to Spring 2019. The participants were recruited via email invitation and social media. Some teachers also contributed their kind help by adding the online link to their Facebook pages for other teachers' participation. The investigators of the study also wrote to individual schools and music teacher associations in HK and TW to ask for their participation in the survey. Participation in the survey questionnaire was entirely voluntary, and the respondents were free to refuse to answer any questions in the questionnaire and interviews or cease completing the questionnaire and participating in the interviews. The self-designed questionnaire was created as a digital version via Google Docs in order to be forwarded to teachers electronically. The questionnaire content³ was the same for the two sectors of in-service and pre-service respondents in HK and TW.

The questionnaire was comprised of three major sections. The subjects responded to options concerning their music teaching in three board areas: (1) general information, such as gender, major instrument learning, and attendance at concerts; (2) information regarding the teachers' attitudes toward music education among Chinese music, local music, and other music cultures; and (3) their opinions on music education regarding Chinese nationalism and the teaching of patriotic songs. The respondents were invited to answer an 8- to 10-minute multiple-choice questionnaire (written in traditional Chinese), which included a 5-point Likert scale, closed items, and multiple-choice questions, all of which addressed the respondents' perceptions of cultural and national values in the music subject, their preferred music styles to teach (particularly their views on teaching local and national Chinese music), and their perceptions of teaching Chinese nationalism through school music education. Most questions followed a 5-point Likert scale to allow the respondents to enunciate degrees of either agreement or interest, for example, from 1 = "highly disagree" to 5 = "highly agree." The respondents' answers were recorded into a data set using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 22. According to the survey requirements, quantitative analysis (e.g., mean, standard deviation, percentage, and t-test analysis) was conducted using the SPSS software.

In addition to the survey questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were carried out to probe into and clarify the interviewees' perceptions, opinions, and explanations. The last question of the survey questionnaire invited the teachers to participate in a follow-up interview. On the basis of the data obtained from the survey questionnaires, interview questions were drafted for the school music teachers. All interviews were conducted on an individual basis in standard Mandarin (the official language in Taiwan) and Cantonese (a dialect commonly spoken in Hong Kong, as well as some neighboring areas in Canton) in Hong Kong by phone and were audio-recorded with the permission of the interviewees. The average length of the teacher interviews was between 30 and 60 minutes. The interview questions were sent to the informants before the interview was conducted. Before the start of the interview, the teacher interviewees were informed that they had the right not to answer any questions that they did not want to or did not feel comfortable answering. Thirty-six music teachers (24 HK and 12 TW teachers) were involved in the one-to-one interviews by telephone between Autumn 2018 and Spring 2019. In addition to personal information, the interview questions were drawn from the following three areas: (1) the teachers' perceptions of cultural and social values in school

music education; (2) their conceptions of teaching music cultures; and (3) their apprehension pertaining to teaching Chinese and national identity. The interview data, which was anonymous, was transcribed manually using Excel software. Thematic content analysis was adopted to examine the interview data by post-coding the interviewees' responses that related to the research questions in this study to look for the patterns of themes in the codes across the interviews.

Major findings

Respondents

The participants of the survey questionnaire in HK and TW were comprised of 102 and 53 student teachers from respective local universities, and 124 and 74 teachers from local primary and secondary school sectors, correspondingly. They were all local teachers and student teachers in the respective regions, and none of them came from Mainland China. Most of the Hong Kong student teachers were involved in full-time teacher training, while most of the Taiwanese student teachers received their professional training on a part-time basis at universities. Years of teaching experience for the teachers in primary and secondary schools in both places ranged between six months and 35 years.

The teachers were asked about the kinds of major musical instruments they had learned in their university education/teacher education training. Among both HK and TW teachers, the most popular instrument was the piano, and only a few had learned Chinese musical instruments such as the pipa (a four-stringed musical instrument), erhu (a two-stringed bowed musical instrument), dizi (a Chinese transverse flute), etc. When asked about their attendance at public concerts in the previous 12 months, a majority of the teachers in both regions attended Western classical music concerts; about half of the surveyed teachers in HK and most of the surveyed teachers in TW attended concerts featuring world music, which included jazz, African music, Japanese music, Indonesian music, Korean music, and music from Central and South America and the Middle East. More than 90% of the TW teachers and fewer than 50% of the HK teachers attended Chinese music concerts featuring traditional, contemporary, or folk music, while about 50% of the HK teachers and more than 60% of the TW teachers attended popular music concerts in the previous 12 months.

The interviewees in this study included 24 HK teachers (13 teaching in primary schools, 10 in secondary schools, and one in both a primary and a secondary school⁴) and 12 female TW teachers (six teaching in primary schools and six in secondary schools). Their musical and educational training was basically on Western musical instruments (mainly the piano) and Western classical music. The years of the teacher interviewees' teaching experience were mostly between three to 10 years. The longest serving years was 35 years for an HK teacher and 22 for a TW teacher.

Preferences for teaching music types in the curriculum for classroom music lessons

As viewed by the respondents in both HK and TW, traditional Western classical music and other world music were the most popular music types in their classroom music lessons (from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree"), respectively. The three most preferred music types among the HK respondents were traditional Western classical music ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 0.75$), other world music ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 0.74$), and Western popular music ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.75$) (see Table 1). The three most preferred music types among the TW respondents were other world music ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.58$), traditional Western classical music ($M = 4.56$, $SD = 0.63$), and local folk music ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 0.70$) (see Table 1).

(Insert Table 1 about here.)

The t-test analysis revealed that there was a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in teaching traditional Chinese music and Chinese folk music between the pre-service teachers ($M = 3.54$; $SD = 0.89$) and the in-service teachers ($M = 3.84$; $SD = 0.88$) in HK, while no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) was found between the pre-service teachers ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 1.11$) and the in-service teachers ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 0.87$) in TW.

Overall, some of the interviewed teachers had greater preferences for teaching different music cultures. Though multicultural music education was perceived as very important in the respective school curricula, some HK and TW teachers in the interviews related that teaching world music was not welcomed or was not properly placed in the school curriculum. The general reasons given by the respondents in HK and TW were: it was “not very supported by the educational authorities”; there was “no provision of world music education in teacher training”; “students do not show an interest in learning world music”; it was “dominated by Western classical music, and insufficient time was provided to promote world music in the music curriculum”; etc. All of the teacher respondents in HK and TW in the interviews considered that traditional Chinese music and Chinese folk music were of educational value to students. However, owing to their musical and educational training, most of them maintained that they taught mainly traditional Western classical music and that Chinese music was still highly undermined in the curriculum.

Perceptions of teaching national education through school music education

Respectively, 86 (38.1%) and 32 (14.2%) responses in HK and 30 (27.3%) and 52 (47.2%) responses in TW of “agree” and “highly agree” showed that the respondents accepted the idea of teaching national music education throughout primary and secondary school music education, with an emphasis on teaching traditional and contemporary Chinese music and Chinese folk music (with a mean score of 3.53 in HK and 4.15 in TW, from 1 = “highly disagree” to 5 = “highly agree”). The HK and TW respondents perceived traditional Chinese music and local music as the most preferred music styles to help students increase their national consciousness, respectively (see Table 2).

(Insert Table 2 about here.)

The major reason for teachers’ competence was their attempt to counter the balance between the importance of traditional Western classical music and other world music in music learning. However, 114 HK and 19 TW teachers declared that they were not able to teach national education in the curriculum (as a means to strengthen students’ national identity awareness for nation-building), and many HK teachers noted that teaching this area was not their interest (see Table 3).

(Insert Table 3 about here.)

However, when asked whether they were concerned about teaching patriotic music (including Chinese anti-war songs and the Chinese national anthem) in school music education, their respective overall responses of “highly disagree,” “disagree,” “no comment,” “agree,” and “highly agree” were in the respective order of 43 (19.0%), 52 (23.0%), 71 (31.4%), 40 (17.7%), and 11 (4.9%) ($M = 2.65$, $SD = 1.14$) in HK, and 13 (25.0%), 16 (30.8%), 13 (25.0%), 5 (9.6%), and 5 (9.6%) ($M = 2.49$, $SD = 1.20$) in TW. The t-test analysis of the HK teachers’ responses demonstrated that there was a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in rating their interest in teaching patriotic music between the pre-service teachers ($M = 2.44$; $SD = 1.24$) and the in-service teachers ($M = 2.82$; $SD = 1.02$) [$t(215) = 2.50$; $p = 0.01$]. However, for the TW teachers, there was no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in rating their interest in teaching patriotic music

between the pre-service teachers ($M = 2.39$, $SD = 1.19$) and the in-service teachers ($M = 2.19$, $SD = 1.19$) [$t(108) = -0.835$; $p > 0.10$]. The data showed that teachers who had more years of teaching experience in both HK and TW believed that the teaching of their respective anthems and other patriotic songs could help students increase their recognition of the nation in regard to their teaching of national education through school music education in both HK and TW ($r = 0.32$, $n = 178$, $p = 0.00$). The major reasons for not teaching national education in school as perceived by the HK respondents included “Teaching this area not my interest” [sic] (65 responses in HK and 0 in TW), “Not welcome by students” (50 responses in HK and 2 in TW), and “No adequate pre-service training” (37 responses in HK and 8 in TW).

Generally speaking, most of the HK respondents expressed that teaching patriotism through school music education was very difficult in classroom music lessons, and they did not agree that they should follow the official documents/curriculum guidelines for promoting national education. Only a few HK teachers emphasized that schools should play an important role in the propagation of images of national history through song singing activities in the curriculum. Among these few respondents, one teacher indicated that their students were positive about learning the concept of national education through school music education, and the others did not provide further explanations. Most TW teachers in the interviews replied that they had no interest in teaching national education through school music education, and such teaching was not obligatory in their school curriculum.

Discussion

This discussion section will follow the main research question of the study by using both the quantitative and qualitative results. First, the findings suggest that, to different extents, though most teachers in HK and TW intended to incorporate local and other world music into their classroom music lessons, their implemented curricula were quite highly based on traditional Western classical music (see Ho, 2011, 2013). In spite of having only a respective 8% and 2% of “other” ethnic groups in HK and TW, there has been a shift in the focus on multicultural music education during the last two decades, particularly in the ways in which social and cultural diversity have been driven in response to the social changes in these two Chinese societies (Curriculum Development Council, 2017a; Law and Ho, 2006; Ministry of Education, 2018). The most popular musical instrument played by the teachers in this study was the piano, while only a few had learned Chinese instruments and none had learned other world music instruments, which suggests that the global cultural understanding of the two music education systems has been narrowed to Westernization with respect to both learning an instrument and other music practices, such as concert attendance. As with all education reforms and movements, this may be the result of a lag in bringing pre-service and in-service teachers up to speed regarding the operation of multicultural education (including knowing local and Chinese music). The survey findings revealed that most teachers felt at ease teaching traditional Chinese music and Chinese folk music, but they felt uncomfortable teaching contemporary Chinese music from the Mainland (see Table 1). As expressed by a few respondents, they avoided teaching contemporary Chinese music from the Mainland as they did not want to associate their music teaching with political situations or political contents related to the PRC. Such self-censorship among music teachers might have determined the extent to which that music type in the school curriculum was performed and practiced.

Moreover, this study also explored the tensions that have arisen in navigating national and cultural values, as well as constructs with pre-service teachers in the respective teacher education programs. The study additionally explored the issue of the educational values and cultures of Hong Kong and Taiwan with the aim of increasing one’s understanding of the

impact of the national cultural context on music teachers and student teachers. According to Hofstede (1980, 1983, 2001), culture is the mind's collective programming among a team of people who have a common understanding and meaning of things around them (also see Smith, 1973). Within this context, this study found that national cultural values had an enduring and autonomous influence on school music teachers in HK and TW. There was also the question of the teachers' professional role in developing a multicultural society through school music education, as well as whether music education in the curriculum was understood as the reproduction of diverse music cultures for youths or as the improvement or transformation of particular cultures (see Freire, 1998). Michael Apple (1990, p. vii) asked, "Whose knowledge is of most worth?", which reflects the sovereign notion of power that can be seen as pertinent in the curriculum. Schools and teachers have been conceptualized from the perspective of national education based on one culture and its political context of school music. Of the agents of political socialization that have affected the formation of political culture in Hong Kong and Taiwanese societies, music education is one that is decisive in this reconstruction.

Nonetheless, it is not so much a result of ideology, control, and oppression, but rather through more complex interactions between sociopolitical situations and teachers' knowledge and preferences that curriculum policy is shaped in classroom music lessons (see Woodford, 2005). There has been great concern about introducing local music cultures into the current education reforms in HK and TW to enhance students' understanding of and sense of belonging to society. This cultural work may require a continuous process of self-reflection so that teachers can create an inspirational teaching and learning environment. The curriculum gap may be inevitable, but effective curriculum engineering and teachers' professional development are essential to reducing the gap between the intended curriculum and the implemented curriculum. Furthermore, teachers may have struggles with their interpretation of (new) cultural consciousness and how to apply it to teaching music to children in a changing world (see Jabbar and Mirza, 2017; Pio, 2017). There are also questions of how HK and TW authorities can exercise their power and provide proper instructions when announcing curriculum outlines and issuing to local schools what and how teachers can teach global, national, and local cultures in classroom music lessons, which remain to be seen.

Second, based on the survey questionnaire and interview findings, many respondents in HK and TW were reluctant to teach and sing their national anthems and other patriotic songs, and they had no intention of introducing nationalistic or patriotic education through song singing and other music activities in the curriculum (see Tables 2 and 3). When some teachers in HK and TW gave their reasons for teaching national education, they considered that it would result in an equal share of Chinese music with traditional Western classical music and other world music in their respective curricula. Thus, promoting the values of national education/national identity in school music education may encounter great resistance (particularly among younger music teachers or those with less teaching experience). According to the interview data of this study, some respondents had a strong opinion about not "indoctrinating" the concept of national identity in the implemented music curriculum (despite their recognition of the inclusion of national education in the overt curriculum). When asked about their perceptions of the types of music that should be cultivated with national consciousness, the most popular music type for the HK respondents was traditional Chinese music, while it was local music for the TW respondents (see Table 2). The findings from this study have raised the question of the political attitude toward Mainland China in the two Chinese communities, which may be related to their opinions on the relative unimportance of including political values in school music education (see Kaeding, 2015). There are also the questions of how to bridge the distance between teachers and the two Chinese governments

and how to cultivate teachers' commitment to society through the school curriculum. The relationship between knowledge and control generally begins with the question of how school knowledge in the curriculum can best be managed, delivered, taught, and evaluated by teachers (see Aronowitz and Giroux, 1993; Giroux, 1981, 1985, 1992). There may be much to learn from how issues such as cultural and national identities are addressed in the music curricula of these two Chinese regions, and thus further international research is needed in this area.

Moreover, music culture and its values may serve as a social construction that distinguishes one group from another, even those with a similar cultural background, as well as enhances the understanding of the interplay between culture, politics, and music education in curriculum development (see Ho, 2011; Kelly, 2002; Law & Ho, 2006). Nationalistic and patriotic education in school music education has induced important challenges to the music education profession and teacher training education in the curriculum inquiry. The t-test analysis in HK showed that there was a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in rating the teachers' interest in teaching traditional Chinese music, folk music, and patriotic music between the pre-service teachers and the in-service teachers. However, in TW the t-test also showed that there was no significant difference in rating their interest in teaching traditional Chinese music, Chinese folk music, and patriotic music between the pre-service teachers and the in-service. Compared with the younger teachers, the teachers in HK with more teaching experience might have felt a stronger sense of belonging to the Mainland, and as a result they may have had a greater interest in teaching traditional Chinese music and folk music, as well as national education, in school music education.

According to the recent results of a University of Hong Kong survey, with responses from 1,105 Hong Kong residents between June 17 and 20, 2019, 71% said that they were not proud of being a national citizen of China, with 90% between the ages of 18 and 29 echoing that sentiment (Cheng, 2019). As stated by Zhong (2016, p. 336), most people in Taiwan "do not deny their ethnic and cultural Chinese identity," but they reject calling themselves "Chinese" as their national identity. Along this line, this may explain why many Taiwanese respondents in this study were open to teaching traditional Chinese music and folk music, but they did not have an interest in introducing national education through school music education. Despite Hong Kong's relationship with China becoming closer due to the 1997 transfer of sovereignty, the recent social movements (particularly the 2019 anti-extradition bill protests) have called for the Hong Kong people's right to self-determination, while Taiwan is increasingly in the process of democratization and liberalization with a sense of "Taiwan consciousness" in the development of its political reforms. Schools in HK are obligated to teach the Chinese national anthem, while Taiwanese teachers are not required to teach their anthem in school.

As the data showed, the teachers in HK and TW have addressed the role of music teachers as cultural workers (see Freire, 1998) and/or value educators (Froehlich and Smith, 2017) in their selection and politicization or depoliticization of the music styles in their respective implemented curricula. As such, teachers not only serve to introduce and legitimate particular forms of cultural and social life, but they also struggle over what forms of authority, types of knowledge and values, and versions of the past and future should be legitimated and transmitted to students. All of this raises questions about how to help teachers in schools to become more informed about the role that music and music education should play in current social and cultural life to prepare students for the world in which they live.

Concluding remarks

By examining the major concerns of music education from the perspective of music teachers, this paper has illuminated the tensions and dilemmas facing music cultures in the reproduction of knowledge and cultures in the respective music curricula of HK and TW. The findings revealed that there are fundamental gaps in the overt and operational curricula in HK and TW

concerning the sociopolitical function of values in school music education. Comparisons between the music teachers from these two Chinese societies have the potential to shed light on teachers' perspectives and experiences when it comes to the construction of cultural and national values in school music education. Most of the respondents in HK and TW in this study preferred teaching traditional Chinese music (rather than contemporary Chinese music from China) and avoided teaching the political indoctrination of national education in their implemented curricula.

Such practices differed significantly across music schooling in HK and TW for different reasons and with social connotations and implications. The findings from TW and HK in this study depicted two different ways in which political culture has been demarcated and defined in relation to music education. First, to some extent, the student teachers and teachers who participated in the study had different experiences with and understandings of culture and knowledge, as well as the dynamics of music classrooms, in ways that inculcated the cultural and national values in their teaching. The findings from HK and TW shed light on and reframed understandings of national and cultural education in school music beyond Chinese communities and East Asia. Second, the role of music teachers was aligned with the affirming, tolerant, and conflicting role acting upon the transmission of knowledge and cultures in school education. With regard to the development of cultural and national values, teachers in both HK and TW were conflicted not only by the issue of the relationship with Mainland China in the introduction of the national anthem and other patriotic songs in the curriculum, but also their professional education and training to provide a facilitating environment for national and cultural development. In maintaining the diversification of political cultures under the "one-country, two-systems" principle, the Hong Kong music education system is institutionalized in a dominant Western context, which conflicts with Chinese traditional culture and the sociopolitical values of the PRC. Key to this is also the need to transform school music education into a means toward the integration of local music and politics in Taiwan.

Given the current tumultuous political unrest between China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, this paper has sought to illuminate the tensions facing school music education and teacher education in the selection of music cultures and knowledge to be taught in Hong Kong and Taiwan. These challenges may also help music teachers, education authorities, and policymakers rethink and reconsider music cultures, cultural and national values, and delivery strategies in both the contents and methods of school music education. How to balance the cultural dimensions of the teaching and learning of local, national, and global music cultures in contemporary HK's and TW's school music education will remain an issue in the future political and cultural developments of the two societies. It is also equally important for the respective governments to develop a long-term policy for teachers' professional development to facilitate them in coping with the demands of the incessantly changing contexts in which they serve. It is anticipated that this problem will be one of the most central occupations of music education scholarship for many years to come.

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Notes

¹ Unless specified in this study, the term "teachers" refers to both pre-service and in-service teachers.

² Hong Kong adopted the "March of the Volunteers" (i.e., the national anthem of the People's Republic of China) as its national anthem. The lyrics were composed by Tian Han (1898–1968)

in 1934 and set to music by Nie Er (1912–1935) in 1935 for the Chinese film *Children of Troubled Times*. The national anthem “Zhonghua Mingguo Guoge (National Anthem of the Republic of China)” was adopted in Taiwan in October 1945 after the surrender of Japan. The national anthem’s words were adapted from a 1924 speech by Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925), who served as the first president of the Republic of China as well as the first leader of the Kuomintang, via the partisan anthem of the Kuomintang in 1937.

³ The reporting of a few questions in the survey questionnaire was omitted in this manuscript, as those questions were not along the theme of analysis and discussion.

⁴ This school paired its primary school section with its secondary school section to operate in a mode referred to as “through-train.” This educational mode was one of the reform proposals put forward by the Education Commission in September 2000.

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