Research Productivity in Music Education and Music Therapy: Update of Publication Records from 1993-2013

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to update previous work, determine changes in publication patterns, identify music scholars of research productivity (as determined by publication rate), and identify the most productive institutions by examining the most recent 21 years of first-tier research publications in music education and music therapy. Results indicated that many researchers listed for their work ending in 1992 do not appear in the 1993-2013 period, though there were five notable exceptions. The main reason behind this change in productivity might be the passage of time (e.g. retirements, changes in position or administrative responsibilities). Patterns were noted in the most active / highest ranked institutions. Twelve institutions were on the lists in 1992 and in the current list. The ranking of the top three remained exactly the same, while the positioning of the other nine seemed to represent more fluidity of publication rate. All institutional data varied with their parallel changes in individual faculty.

Keywords: Music Research Productivity, Music Therapy Productivity, Institutional Ranking, Institutional Research productivity

Researchers in Music Education and Music Therapy: Update of Publication Records from 1993-2013

Reputation and prestige in higher education has been the subject of interest since the opening of the twentieth century. For example, in 1906 Cattel surveyed scientists and determined the top one thousand "Starred" scientists. The latter were named in the first edition of the "American Men of Science", and were used to rank the institutions in which they worked (Cattel, 1906). This product was deemed so important that Cattel followed up on that project with two articles four years later (1910a; 1910b). Rankings of this nature continued to be published over the following years, such as the study by Visher (1931), who used existing data in the sciences and compared them to several previous studies, to the extent that he created a model of academic trajectory for institutions. Interestingly, Kerr (1991) also took contemporary data from a longitudinal study (Webster, 1984) and compared those 1982 data to Cattel's study. He found that only three schools of the top 15 in 1906 had disappeared from the 1982 listing. Seemingly, these rankings of the top schools have been remarkably stable over most of a century.

In fact, these rankings have had such a draw that the popular press has also embraced the creation of listings. The *U.S. News* and *World Report* (e.g. 1983) publish an annual ranking of schools and colleges. Other volumes published annually include *Barron's* (i.e., Barron's 2002) and *The Princeton Review* (2016), among many others.

On the other hand, higher education administrators often look at other indices to monitor their school's progress. To that end, electronic databases have been created to collect and collate citation information from a diversity of sources, employing differing degrees of accuracy and rigor. Researchgate® is an electronic source whereby published

authors can disseminate their own articles and abstracts utilizing a social media approach. It also calculates an impact number of the author's contribution, based on the self-reported data, as well as activities of dissemination that happen through the service. Web of Science™ is an online indexing service that utilizes an editorial board to evaluate author citations, providing citation reports for selected journals. Reference searches track published authors from science and social science journals, as well as scholarly books and conference proceedings from 1898 to present. Scopus® is another online indexing service that utilizes an advisory board in order to select abstract and citation information from peer-reviewed journals. Citation information is gathered from science, technology, social science, arts, and humanities journals, as well as books and conference proceedings. Articles in Scopus® date from 1823 to the present. These indices continue to improve their services over time. However, considering the vastness of academic publication and presentation, it could still be some time before they are completely sound in every academic discipline.

While theory has been noticeably absent from traditional faculty productivity studies, a few studies have included some justification for their analysis and reasoning, though none of those have been in music. Of the theories explored, perhaps the most defensible is that of behavioral reinforcement. Essentially, one can view a system of faculty merit and rank as a reward system as well as a schedule for reinforcement (Tien & Blackburn, 1996). In this proposed paradigm, the process of doing research resulting in a publication would be the behavior. This behavior would be reinforced by positive faculty evaluations, merit increases, and promotions in rank. The basic schedule of this would be that these formal reinforcements would occur each year, at a fixed time, and the level of reinforcement would be linked to the level of the behavioral success. Further, in environments where publication

is valued, a personal (not institutional) continuous reinforcement schedule is also probably in place as a function of culture. Such is the theory this report will adopt.

In the academic fields of music education and music therapy, there has been substantive inquiry regarding the content of published research projects. Numerous authors have engaged in quantifications of research papers presented at conferences and in journal publications to examine particular aspects of publication patterns. Jellison (1973) identified categories of investigation within the *Journal of Music Therapy* during the years 1952-1972. Articles were categorized by methodological approach: historical, philosophical, experimental, and descriptive. Yarbrough (1984) conducted a content analysis of the *Journal of Research in Music Education* for the years 1953-1983 to examine methodological approaches in a similar way to Jellison (1973). In addition, Yarbrough determined whether the articles stemmed from dissertations or theses. Hedden (1993) investigated 48 issues of the *Journal of Research in Music Education* and research poster presentations at the national conference of the Music Educators National Conference in order to compare the frequency of male and female authorship. Each of the previous studies addressed the nature or genesis of the publications in question.

Other researchers have focused on authorship of published papers, or the impact of those papers on subsequent research efforts. Grashel and Lowe (1995) identified the research contributions of school music educators (i.e., teachers who were employed in the K-12 public school sector) in the *Journal of Research in Music Education* from the years 1953-1993. Those authors pointed out that despite how much it is said that practitioners should be involved in research activities, in general, they rarely are. They chronicled the 41 studies whose authors or coauthors were school music educators. Concurrently, the authors stated

ways in which college music education faculty might ensure that research is used in their classes, and how they might encourage their students in these efforts.

Schmidt and Zdzinski (1993) examined articles published between the years 1975-1990 in the *Journal of Research in Music Education*, the *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, *Psychology of Music*, *The Journal of Music Therapy*, *Contributions to Music Education*, and the *Missouri Journal of Research in Music Educatio*n to obtain a rank order of most productive authors as well as most cited studies within that 15-year period. Kratus (1993) focused more on research impact and examined the frequency of citations in the *Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning* to create a rank order of the most productive researchers by author, frequency of citation, and institutional affiliation. Sample (1992), also concerned with publication impact, examined the reference pages of the *Journal of Research in Music Education*, the *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, and *Contributions to Music Education* from their inception dates until 1989 in order to identify citation frequency.

Standley (1984), and later Brittin and Standley (1997), completed the most comprehensive studies regarding research productivity and eminence in music education and music therapy. Standley (1984) quantified productivity in music research by examining individual and institutional affiliation of researcher contributions in the three premier journals in the field of music education and music therapy: the *Journal of Research in Music Education,* the *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education,* and the *Journal of Music Therapy*. In addition to productivity by author, Standley included what she defined as "eminence" reflected in these projects (i.e., frequency of author citations) for articles published from the journal's inception to 1982. Data that identified the institutional site of

completed dissertations were also compiled and reported. The results of this study included a rank order of the fifteen most prolific researchers, the twenty-nine most eminent scholars as determined by frequency of citation, and a rank order of the top 25 academic institutions as determined by research productivity.

Brittin and Standley (1997) expanded Standley's initial study to include the years 1983-1992. This analysis was also expanded to include abstracts from two databases: ERIC and PsycLit. Authors and subject identifiers were compared and counted. The product of this study was a rank order of the 23 most productive researchers according to author publication, the 25 most eminent researchers according to frequency of citation, as well as the top 20 academic institutions according to author publication. In addition to eminence and productivity, data were tabulated for the most frequent subject identifiers compared with the 23 most productive authors.

Despite the existence of the aforementioned databases that attempt to track abstracts and articles in order to determine eminence or impact, those tools are still in what might be considered their infancy in many ways. The authors of the present study determined that an update to the productivity reports in music education and music therapy would yield useful information. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to update the work of Standley (1984) and Brittin and Standley (1997) by examining the most recent 21 years of first-tier publications to determine if publication patterns had changed, and to report the most productive institutions of music education and music therapy research, as well as to identify the top music scholars in research productivity as determined by publication rate.

Method

The database created for this investigation began at the time when the last investigation left off—1993. Data were tabulated from the *Journal of Research in Music Education*, the *Bulletin for the Council of Research in Music Education*, and the *Journal of Music Therapy*. The *International Journal of Music Education: Research* was added to this listing beginning in 2000—the year it became a systematic, blind reviewed, refereed journal. The reasoning behind this addition is that, once the journal adopted a rigorous review process, its submissions and acceptance rate expanded to join the others in this category. This process increased exponentially when Sage began publishing and indexing it. Its reputation was confirmed when the Australian Research Council ranked IJME an A* journal, and named it the premier journal in the field. That recognition clearly placed *IJME* with the other three journals in this first-tier category of rigor and selectivity; it has since become a worldwide target for many researchers to publish their best material.

The procedures for determining journal publication patterns and author/institutional productivity in this study roughly emulated those used in the previous two investigations (Brittin & Standley, 1997; Standley, 1984). Authors' names and institutional affiliations were recorded for every data based article published in each journal issue from January 1993 through December 2013. Publications that were not considered new data (book reviews, dissertation reviews, rebuttals, editorials, etc.) were not recorded.

Regarding the classification of articles for institutions, no affiliation was inserted in the few cases where the author did not claim an institution. Moreover, many authors moved during the period encompassed by this study. No effort was made to determine the author's

affiliation while doing the actual research. The authors' claimed affiliations in the printed journal were the ones recorded.

Articles with multiple authors were equally and fully credited to each of the respective authors, and each institution received one credit for each author in the article. This method is flawed in that an article with a single author gets 100% of the credit (i.e., 1 count), but an article with four authors gets 400% credit (i.e., 4 counts). However, no attempt was made to determine or divide credit of effort in this recording. Although this inflated credit is a clear inaccuracy, this flaw is no different than giving the 400% article a total of 100% credit, but doing so by assigning each of the authors an arbitrary percentage of the 100%. The decision to maintain the 400% method was made for two reasons: 1) the previous research was conducted using this method, and 2) it is much more positive to give more undeserved credit than to shortchange any author.

It should be noted that the scope of this investigation was only from 1993-2013. The previous database (Brittin & Standley, 1997) was not obtained. Comparisons to years of publications prior to the present investigation were made with their published numbers, not their raw data. Finally, two independent researchers quantified all data for this investigation for the purposes of reliability. After initial lists were created, a second set of lists was made. A third researcher viewed and reconciled any differences between the lists until all investigators were satisfied with their accuracy.

Results

The three questions posed for this project were whether the nature of the journals' submission patterns had changed over the life of the journals, what was the picture of research productivity in terms of individuals, and what was the picture of research

productivity in terms of institutions. All data were taken from the journals, and a listing of the journals included can be found in the appendix. Two independent researchers completed the data extraction, and a third researcher reconciled the differences.

In the current study, the investigators examined the listing of authors contributing to the first-tier journals to determine patterns of author population. *JRME* and *CRME* increased their mean number of authors to slightly over 22 per year (see Table 1). *JMT* remained somewhat lower at 20.5 per year. *IJME* was lower than the other three with just over 18 authors represented per year. The second part of the table references how many authors contributed only one article during the period in question. While the three more longitudinally examined journals showed a modest decrease in the number of authors with a single contribution, it should be noted that the time frame examined has doubled from the last data collection. On the other hand, and with that consideration, it should be noted that *IJME*, which publishes copy at a much lower rate than the other three journals, had a substantially lower rate of authors with a single contribution.

An examination of individual researcher productivity showed some similarities to previous studies, and some notable differences. As this investigation examined only the last 21 years, data were not additive to previous lists. However, only five individuals appear here that were also on the list reported by Brittin and Standley (1997). These five individuals were Madsen, Geringer, Darrow, Duke, and Price. The other 16 researchers on this list are new appearances (see Tables 2 and 3).

The 21 most productive institutions from 1993-2013 are listed in Table 4. The parallel table from the earlier study is reproduced here as Table 5 (Brittin & Standley, 1997). The list of productive institutions was much more consistent than the individual list. The

previous study listed 20 institutions, and the current investigation lists 21. Twelve schools appear on both lists. The latter reflects what Brittin and Standley (1997) found in their study—namely, that the academic sites seem very stable. The three highest ranked schools in the 1992 study remain the three top-ranked schools in this study as well: The Florida State University, The University of Kansas, and The University of Texas at Austin, respectively. Louisiana State University moved up the largest number of ranks, from 15th to 4th. The University of Washington moved from no previous representation to 5th.

Discussion

In the original listing of publication activity, Standley (1984) pointed out that the impetus for the project was that some academic administrators were placing some level of emphasis on productivity and eminence tracking. She implied that this tracking might be a continuing pattern, or that it could be a momentary phase. In fact, tracking productivity and eminence has continued and even increased over the last two decades. Although the emphasis each institution might place on these indices varies substantially, tracking these types of data is a continuingly growing activity (Freid, 2005; Lombardi, Craig, Capaldi, & Gater, 2000; Toutkoushian, Porter, Danielson, & Hollis, 2003). The main rationale for this report is that the specific issues analyzed (i.e. contributions to first-tier journals only) are not tracked by the main indices at this time. However, as earlier articles reported, with respect to references and retrievability, citation indices are no longer necessary in this iteration, as they are more than adequately addressed in other reporting agencies or rendered moot by technological advancements. By the same token, by the time that this report needs to be

updated, we may well be able to access these data accurately and easily on our mobile devices.

The nature of the journals seems to be fairly stable regarding the number of authors represented each year. *JRME* had the largest increase, but it should be noted that there were a few years when *JRME* published many more pages than normal to alleviate a backlog of accepted articles. It is therefore estimated that the stability of the author count relates to number of pages and similarities in single and dual authorship of papers. *IJME* is the clear outlier in this group, but their publication rate was also considerably different than the other journals. This difference can be noted through a careful perusal of the appendix.

The number of authors with a single contribution decreased across the three journals from when they were reported in 1997 to the present study. However, this change might be mostly explained by the differences in the time periods selected for the studies. Although many authors might only contribute an article to these journals once during a career, others who are infrequent might contribute more than once when the span measured is 21 years rather than ten. *IJME*, again the outlier, might have a different author base, as it was the first of these journals to get complete indexing services. Authors who were sensitized to having their articles easily found might have focused on that journal early in order to disseminate their work more widely. Although this situation has been attenuated with all the journals now, this condition did exist for some time.

The transience of individuals in the productivity table is interesting to consider. The reasons why people moved around, on and off of the listing seem as individual as the people themselves. Some scholars have been consistent researchers, doing first-tier work for decades. More than a few individuals that appear on the 1997 list are still active, but publish

in different places now. Several people on that list have moved to different positions, and those positions do not allow for engaging in a significant amount of first-tier research. Many others have retired. Several of the newcomers in the current listing were not in a position to publish before 1993, but have been consistent since that point. Regardless of the reasons, all researchers on each of these lists should be noted as some of the primary scholars and thinkers in our field.

Institutional productivity was much more consistent than individual productivity. This result is consistent with findings in the sciences as well (Kerr, 1991). This consistency over time and across disciplines leads to a hypothesis that perhaps there is an institutional culture that encourages and promotes research activity. Furthermore, referring back to the reinforcement theory adopted for this project, if reinforcement is consistent within an institution, it would lead to steady productivity becoming enculturated. Leaders (and subsequent leaders) at schools value that activity and promote those values by affording professors course loads and service assignments that allow them to be productive. Also, the value that colleagues place on productivity can play a group role in what professors do. Furthermore, there might be infrastructure and funding to support individuals engaging in research activities. Finally, when one gets into the habit of being productive in scholarship, "habit strength" might take over. All of these aspects are most likely responsible for these findings, although perhaps to different degrees at each individual school.

The methodology of this project utilized a simple frequency process. Although the research might appear straightforward from the outside, the matter of completion is more complex than one might assume. Many authors publish in multiple names – not only single versus married names, but also sometimes with middle names/initials. There are also major

inconsistencies with regard to sample size in journals. In the original article, Standley used almost 30 years of *JRME*, but only 20 years of *CRME* and *JMT* (1984). The second study encompassed 10 years of all three journals (Brittin & Standley, 1997). This study adds *IJME*, but for a shorter period than the other three journals, and encompasses 21 years, not 30 or 10. Cross comparisons between the studies must be viewed with all of those issues in mind. Additionally, the counting issues that arise from single authored and multiple authored credits are certainly noteworthy. The institutional data are probably the "cleanest" of the sets, compared to individual data, because the method chosen to assign author credit (100% for each author in a multiple-authored article) might indeed be considered inaccurate. However, as noted before, replication of the second analysis (Brittin & Standley, 1997) and the desire to err on the side of caution instead of depriving authors of their legitimate credit motivated this methodological choice.

A critical decision made in this study was that only first-tier journals in the field would be examined. Especially in the case of music therapy, many scholars might prefer to publish in journals that expand the visibility of the field, and a significant amount of every person's best work may not go to the journal being examined in this research. Furthermore, very few scholars publish only first-tier material. Consequently, this study does not claim to have examined every researcher's total scholarly output. Rather, it is a simple snapshot of first-tier publication rates by individuals in the fields of music education and music therapy. Notwithstanding the methodological choices, some aspects of this report certainly shed light on the research in our field. Some scholars have been continually productive over a long period of time and continue to add to our knowledge of our external world. While there are young people in our profession that are clearly gaining great traction, we can only hope that

they will enjoy the longevity of the staple scholars. Finally, the consistency of some institutions over long periods of time on the list of Most Productive, although not unrelated to the faculty at those institutions, is most certainly a reflection of a culture of research productivity. Although the continually expanding tracking indices may render this activity unnecessary in the near future, studies similar to the present one are enlightening in ways that those services have not yet become, and unquestionably, further review and examination of these data is warranted.

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Table 1

Comparison of Author Population of the First-Tier Music Education / Music Therapy Research Journals across review time spans

	JRME	CRME	IJME	JMT
Year of inception	1953	1963	1983	1964
Number of authors since inception – 1982	775	361		353
Mean authors per year	25.8	18.1		18.5
Number of authors since 1983 – 1992	194	201	(188)*	180
Mean authors per year	19.4	20.1	(18.1)	18.0
Number of authors since 1993 – 2013	474	465	383	431
Mean authors per year	22.6	22.1	18.2	20.5
Total number of authors	1548	1041	571	1047
Percentage of authors with a single article contribution up to 1982	54%	47%		71%
Percentage of authors with a single article contribution 1983-1992	78%	81%	(87%)	81%
Percentage of authors with a single article contribution 1993-2013	70%	71%	35%	74%

*Parenthetical numbers for IJME 83-92 presented for context. Not factored into productivity data.

Table 2

The 21 Most Productive Music Researchers (1993-2013)

	JRME	CRME	IJME	JMT	Total
C. K. Madsen	14	11	4	6	35
J. M. Geringer	18	11	4	1	34
C. M. Johnson	9	10	4	4	27
A. A. Darrow	7	3	4	7	21
W. E. Fredrickson	9	7	3	2	21
C. M. Conway	7	10	0	0	17
R. A. Duke	12	4	0	1	17
H. E. Price	8	7	2	0	17
D. A. Capperella-Sheldon	11	4	0	1	16
M. Mercadal-Brotons	0	6	0	10	16
M. J. Bergee	10	3	1	0	14
M. J. Silverman	0	0	1	13	14
R. V. Brittin	8	4	0	1	13
P. Flowers	8	2	1	2	13
J. W. Cassidy	7	1	0	4	12
D. Gregory	2	1	0	9	12
P. Miksza	6	6	0	0	12
C. V. Fung	2	7	2	0	11
J. T. Humphreys	7	2	2	0	11
R. B. MacLeod	6	3	2	0	11
S. J Morrison	8	3	0	0	11

Table 3

The 23 Most Productive Music Researchers (1953-1992) from Brittin and Standley, 1997.

	JRME		CRME		JMT			
Researcher	1982	1992	1982	1992	1982	1992	Sum	Rank
C. K. Madsen	6	10	4	7	14	8	49	1
J. M. Geringer	3	6	2	5	3	16	20	2
J. Alley / Standley	0	4	0	0	7	5	16	3.5
R. A. Duke	0	11	0	5	0	0	16	3.5
A. LeBlanc	3	8	2	0	2	0	15	5
L. G. Dorow	5	1	1	0	6	1	14	6.5
E. E. Gordon	4	0	4	5	1	0	14	6.5
E. P. Asmus	4	2	1	3	2	1	13	8.5
A. A. Darrow	0	3	0	0	1	9	13	8.5
J. Gilbert/Galloway	4	1	0	0	5	2	12	10.5
A. L. Steele	0	0	0	0	12	0	12	10.5
R. S. Moore	3	0	2	2	1	3	11	12.5
C. Yarbrough	3	4	0	2	2	0	11	12.5
J. D. Boyle	5	0	3	2	0	0	10	16
R. D. Greer	2	0	3	0	4	1	10	16
S. K. Hedden	4	1	3	1	1	0	10	16
G. Heller	1	4	1	2	1	1	10	16
M. J. Staum	0	1	0	1	4	4	10	16
C. Braswell	0	0	0	0	4	5	9	21
R. Colwell	3	0	6	3	0	0	9	21
P. A. Haack	0	2	6	1	0	0	9	21
H. E. Price	1	6	0	2	0	0	9	21
B. Reimer	2	0	4	3	0	0	9	21

Table 4

The Top 21 Academic Institutions in Music Research Productivity: Combined Publications from 1993-2013

	JRME	CRME	IJME	JMT	Total
Florida State University	51	29	21	75	176
University of Kansas	30	25	12	45	112
University of Texas at Austin	27	13	4	10	54
Louisiana State University	27	8	5	7	47
University of Washington	30	11	1	2	44
Ohio State University	24	9	2	4	39
Indiana University - Bloomington	21	12	3	0	36
McGill University	26	2	7	1	36
Michigan State University	10	14	0	9	33
University of Alabama	15	10	0	7	32
University of Iowa	6	2	1	22	31
University of Missouri - KC	5	9	2	15	31
University of Illinois	12	15	2	0	29
Bowling Green State U	16	8	4	0	28
University of Minnesota	6	5	3	13	27
University of Oregon	8	12	4	2	26
University of Michigan	9	16	0	0	25
University of the Pacific	5	5	0	14	24
Arizona State University	14	4	2	3	23
Colorado State University	1	1	0	20	22
University of Georgia	2	7	1	12	22

Table 5

The Top 21 Academic Institutions in Music Research Productivity: Combined Publications from 1953-1992 from Brittin and Standley, 1997.

	Articles	1983-92				
	To 1982	JRME	CRME	JMT	Sum	Rank
Florida State University	54	20	10	26	100	1
University of Kansas	54	15	9	18	96	2
University of Texas at Austin	11	23	11	1	46	3
University of Illinois	27	0	11	0	38	4
Loyola University	16	1	0	20	37	5.5
University of Iowa	20	4	4	9	37	5.5
Ohio State University	23	9	3	0	35	7
Michigan State University	12	15	0	4	31	8.5
University of Georgia	16	1	3	11	31	8.5
Kent State University	9	12	8	0	29	10
Indiana University – Bloomington	14	8	6	0	28	11
Teachers College – Columbia	17	2	0	3	22	12.5
University of Wisconsin – Madison	10	6	6	0	22	12.5
SUNY – Buffalo	12	2	6	1	21	14
Louisiana State University	2	8	8	1	19	15
University of Kentucky	11	6	1	0	18	16
University of Minnesota	13	2	0	2	17	17
Pennsylvania State University	16	0	0	0	16	19
University of Miami	9	1	3	3	16	19
University of the Pacific	10	1	0	5	16	19

Appendix

Journals Examined

Journal of Research in Music Education

Volumes 41 – 61 inclusive

Bulletin for the Council for Research in Music Education

Numbers 115-198, but not 117, 123, 130, 132, or 144

International Journal of Music Education: Research

Volume 38, 39, 40. Volume 22, Number 1, Volume 23, Number 1, Volume 24, Number 1, Volume 25, Numbers 1 & 2, and Numbers 1 & 3 of Volumes 26 – 31.

Journal of Music Therapy

Volumes 30 – 50 inclusive